

# STARS AND STRIPES®

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 7, 2005

## Army Reserve chief says force becoming 'broken'

Memo warns policies hurt mission in Afghanistan, Iraq Page 3



**Troops on mission of healing**

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SEAN KIMMONS/Courtesy of the U.S. Army  
Sgt. Genevieve Powell, a combat medic with Company C, 225th Forward Support Battalion, holds 6-month-old Elaf Zedan while her mother and other women wait to be examined during a medical assistance visit late last month at the Al-Ta'meen Health Clinic in Iraq. About 40 medical personnel treated more than 160 Iraqis during the visit.

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## News Tracker ... What's new with old news

### World

**IRA denies crime involvement:** The Irish Republican Army said Thursday its members are not involved in crime — a statement that only fueled politicians' accusations that the outlawed group committed the world's biggest all-cash robbery.

In its New Year's message, the IRA didn't specifically mention the Dec. 20 raid on the main vault of Northern Bank in Belfast, Northern Ireland, when a hostage-taking gang escaped with an estimated 22 million British pounds. Detectives have placed the IRA at the top of its list of suspects and searched several properties in hard-line Catholic parts of Belfast, but haven't arrested anyone.

**U.S. Embassy bomb plot:** Two of six men accused of plotting to bomb the U.S. Embassy in Paris denied on Wednesday that they had links to an alleged al-Qaida leader.

Djamel Beghal, the plot's suspected ring-leader, and five other suspects went on trial this week on charges of criminal association with a terrorist enterprise. All six deny the charges.

French officials allege that Beghal had said during questioning that Abu Zubaydah, al-Qaida's suspected financier, gave him the order to target American interests when they met at an Afghan camp in March 2001.

**Ukraine election:** The Supreme Court on Thursday rejected losing presidential candidate Viktor Yanukovich's appeal of last month's presidential reeve.

The three-judge panel threw out his appeal, which alleged massive fraud and asked the court to invalidate voting in all of Ukraine's 225 electoral districts. The panel did not immediately explain its ruling. The appeal was a bid to overturn the Central Election Commission's unanimous refusal last week to consider a similar complaint. Yanukovich, who still has one more chance to overturn the election results, has said openly he had little hope of success, but has vowed to fight on against the Dec. 26 vote, which preliminary results show Yushchenko winning.

**Romanian rock star death:** A U.S. Marine who left Romania after being involved in a Dec. 3 fatal auto accident in Bucharest while serving as a member of the U.S. Embassy security detail there, is still working at his battalion headquarters in Quantico, Va. The case is still under investigation, a Marine spokesman said.

Staff Sgt. Christopher R. VanGoethem, who was commander of the embassy's security detachment at the time, was taken out of Romania within a day after the accident that killed Teofil Peter, a popular Romanian musician.

The Romanian government asked the United States to waive VanGoethem's immunity and return him to Bucharest to be questioned.

But on Thursday, State Department spokesman Lou Fintor said it was premature to consider the request until the investigation by Naval Criminal Investigative Service is finished.

### War on terrorism

**Padilla trial challenge:** Attorneys defending an American accused of participating in an al-Qaida plot to set off a "dirty bomb" have issued a challenge to federal prosecutors: prove it or free him.



**Cause of derailment:** A charred freight car, with smoke rising from it, is towed out of the Howard Street tunnel on July 19, 2001, in Baltimore. A CSX freight train carrying hazardous material derailed in the tunnel a day earlier, causing billowing black smoke to fill the downtown area of the city. Poor record-keeping by Baltimore and CSX Corp. plus lack of communication between the city and the railroad aggravated a dangerous situation when the train derailed. The National Transportation Safety Board said Wednesday.

Jose Padilla's attorneys on Wednesday asked U.S. District Judge Henry Floyd to hear their writ of habeas corpus, a petition that allows a civilian judge to consider their case. Padilla was not present.

Padilla was arrested at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport in 2002 after returning from Pakistan. The federal government said he received weapons and explosives training from members of al-Qaida.

### Business

**WorldCom lawsuit:** Ten former WorldCom board members have tentatively agreed to pay \$54 million, a third of it from their own pockets, to settle their portion of a lawsuit brought over the company's collapse, according to published reports Thursday.

The outside directors agreed in principle to pay \$18 million of their own money, with the remaining \$36 million to be paid by the directors' liability insurers. The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times reported. The class-action suit was brought by investors who lost billions when WorldCom went under in a multibillion-dollar accounting scandal.

**US Airways financial troubles:** A bankruptcy judge on Thursday canceled a collective bargaining agreement between US Airways and its machinists union, providing millions of dollars in annual savings that the airline says will prevent the need for imminent liquidation.

The termination of the contract with the International Association of Machinists would result in pay cuts for union workers ranging from 6 percent to 35 percent and

the loss of thousands of union jobs.

### States

**N.H. murder cases:** Pamela Smart, the key figure in New Hampshire's most publicized murder trial, is asking for a pardon.

Smart, 37, was convicted in 1991 of persuading her teenage lover and his friends to murder her husband. Four teens, including one who admitted pulling the trigger, testified against her in a trial that was televised live around the state, and prompted several books and a movie.

In a pardon request filed last week with the attorney general's office, Smart repeats her arguments that she didn't get a fair trial because of all the media attention and her sentence was too harsh.

**Spector trial transcripts:** A California appeals court has denied a request by attorneys for famed rock music producer Phil Spector to keep grand jury transcripts in his murder case sealed.

The 2nd District Court of Appeal in Los Angeles issued a one-line judgment Wednesday denying the petition and upholding a Superior Court judge's ruling in November that the transcripts should be released.

Superior Court Judge Larry Paul Fidler said Spector's lawyers failed to show how releasing the documents would prevent a fair jury from being chosen for the trial.

**Michael Jackson trial:** A comedy club owner who is a witness in the Michael Jackson molestation case held a news conference in Los Angeles to accuse the singer's defense team of harassing him.

As soon as he was wrapped up his remarks Wednesday, he was served with a fresh defense subpoena.

Massachusetts' who owns the Laugh Factory in Hollywood, introduced Jackson to the boy who is accusing the pop star of molestation. The boy had participated in Masada's comedy camp for underprivileged children and was battling cancer when Jackson met him at Masada's urging.

**Space station problems:** The space station crew is spending the new year dealing with an old problem: a broken oxygen generator.

The primary machine for producing oxygen aboard the international space station stopped working again Saturday. The cabin atmosphere was replenished Tuesday with oxygen from the supply ship that arrived on Christmas Day with much-needed food.

Cosmonaut Salizhan Sharipov and astronaut Leroy Chiao spent most of Wednesday trying to fix the Russian-built oxygen generator. The latest problem appears to be similar to what crippled the system last year.

**BTX serial killer:** A serial killer in Wichita, Kan., known as BTX may have taken a new victim. The man was killed in 1977 and given it to a woman he was dating at the time, authorities said Wednesday.

The killer has sent several letters to police since resurfacing last March after years of silence. Police said that in one recent communication, he said he took items from the crime scene after killing Nancy Fox on Dec. 8, 1977.

Police are looking for a necklace described as a gold chain with two pearls. Authorities are asking anyone who may have seen the necklace or received a similar necklace as a gift in December 1977 or early 1978 to call the BTX tip line.

From staff and wire reports

### Clarification

A story in Thursday's paper about a V Corps Web site — [www.vcorps.army.mil/memory/memory.htm](http://www.vcorps.army.mil/memory/memory.htm) — contained inaccurate information. Mike Hurst is an employee for the Hohenfels, Germany-based, Northrop Grumman Information Technology.

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# General: Reserve can't fulfill war duties

By ROBERT BURNS

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Army Reserve, whose part-time soldiers serve in combat and support roles in Iraq and Afghanistan, is so hampered by misguided Army policies and practices that it is "rapidly degenerating into a 'broken' force," the Reserve's most senior general says.

Gen. James R. Helmly, chief of the Army Reserve, wrote in an internal memorandum to the Army's top uniformed officer that the Reserve has reached the point of being unable to fulfill its missions in Iraq and Afghanistan and to regenerate its forces for future missions.

The Army Reserve has about 200,000 soldiers, nearly 52,000 of them on active duty for the war on terrorism, mainly in Iraq. They provide combat support, medical care, transportation, logistics services and other support. About 50 have died in the Iraq war.

Helmly's Dec. 20 memo is addressed to Gen. Peter Schoomaker, the Army chief of staff, and was first reported in Wednesday's editions of The (Baltimore) Sun, whose Web site has a link to the eight-page document. Two officials who saw the original memo confirmed its contents to The As-

## Helmly's memo says force is becoming 'broken' and blames Army policies on fighting terrorism

sociated Press.

"The purpose of this memorandum is to inform you of the Army Reserve's inability under current policies, procedures and practices ... to meet



Helmly

Afghanistan wars.

"The Army Reserve is additionally in grave danger of being unable to meet other operational requirements," including those in classified contingency plans for other potential wars or national emergencies, "and is rapidly degenerating into a 'broken' force," Helmly wrote.

The Army Reserve's ability to

regenerate its recently deployed forces is "eroding daily," he added, in part because Reserve troops who finish tours in Iraq and Afghanistan are required to leave substantial amounts of their equipment for other forces and for contractors.

Al Schilf, spokesman for Helmly, said the issues raised in the memo "are ones that the general has raised in the past. The Army is working to deal with many of those issues and has addressed several of them, such as tour length."

"He wouldn't have signed his name to [the memo] if he didn't stand by it."

Helmly also referred to a practice, not previously disclosed, of requiring each Reserve soldier who receives a mobilization order with less than 30 days notice to sign a "volunteer statement."

From his brief description of the practice it appears that this is done to reduce the number of reserve cases of short-notice, involuntary mobilizations.

He also criticized the practice of offering Reserve soldiers an

extra \$1,000 a month if they volunteer to be mobilized a second time. This confuses "volunteers" with "mercenaries," he said.

Helmly's blunt description of these problems is the sort of internal critique that rarely becomes public, although some private defense analysts and members of Congress have openly questioned whether the strains on the Army caused by the Iraq war would eventually threaten the all-volunteer force.

Sen. Jack Reed, D-R.I., said Wednesday he was disturbed by the concerns raised in Helmly's memo.

"By consistently underestimating the number of troops necessary for the successful execution of Iraq, the administration has placed a tremendous burden on the Army Reserve and created this crisis," Reed said.

Col. Joe Curtin, a spokesman at Army headquarters in the Pentagon, said the Army has a group of experts studying a wide range of problems facing not only the Army Reserve but also the Army National Guard.

"These issues are largely being addressed now," Curtin said.

"General Helmly's concerns are of a serious nature, and the Army realizes it has to work very hard and diligently to resolve them, and our intent is to resolve those issues."

Since President Bush launched a global war on terrorism after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, about 65,000 Army Reserve soldiers, or about two-thirds of that entire force, have deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan, according to Pentagon figures. About one-third have deployed more than once.

Among Helmly's other complaints:

■ The Army is relying too heavily on volunteers to mobilize for duty in Iraq and Afghanistan. The most likely to volunteer are "those who often enjoy less responsible positions in civilian life," he said.

■ The Army has failed to use its legal authority to call to active duty those members of the Reserve who have violated their service contract, by missing training or other actions. Helmly said he asked for but was not given the authority to discharge those Reserve members, who number 16,400.

Senior reporter Lee Shane contributed to this report from Washington.

# Iraq state of emergency extended through election

By BASSEM MROUE

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — A state of emergency, originally announced two months ago, was extended for 30 days throughout the country except for the Kurdish-run areas north of the country, an Iraqi government statement said. The decree includes a night-time curfew and gives the government additional power to make arrests and launch operations.

"We expect some escalation [of attacks] here and there" ahead of Jan. 30 elections, Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi said. "This is a precaution to protect the Iraqi people as well as the elections."

The bodies of 18 young Iraqi Shiites killed last month while seeking work at a U.S. base have been found in a field near Mosul, police said Thursday, as the Iraqi government extended a state of emergency for a month because of violence ahead of landmark elections.

Police said the insurgents shot the 18 men, who ranged in age from 14 to 20, execution style on Dec. 8 after stopping them at two minibuses about 30 miles west of the city of 225 miles north of Baghdad. All the men were Shiite Muslims from Baghdad's northern neighborhood of Kadimiya who had been hired by an Iraqi contractor to work at a U.S. base in Mosul. The bodies were discovered Wednesday.

A second car bomber killed five Iraqi policemen in Baquba on Wednesday.

In a statement posted on a Web site Thursday, the al-Qaida in Iraq, led by Jordanian terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, claimed responsibility for both the Hilla and the Baquba attacks. Meanwhile, as foreign ministers from Iraq's neighboring states met in Jordan Thursday, King Abdullah II tried to temper remarks that reflect Arab fears that Iraqis will produce a Shiite Muslim-dominated Iraq that will align itself with Persian Iran.

In an interview published Thursday by



An Iraqi woman walks past a poster that says 'no for dictatorship, yes for the Iraqi unity' and containing an image of the Shiite cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani on Baghdad. The country's elections are still scheduled for Jan. 30.

## U.S. soldier's trial for alleged Iraq prison abuse to begin

PORT HOOD, Texas — An Army reservist seen prominently in the photos of Iraqi prisoners who were suffering sexual humiliation and other brutality at the Abu Ghraib prison goes to trial Friday.

Barring last-minute plea deals, Spc. Charles Graner of Uniontown, Pa., will be the first of four soldiers from the Maryland-based 372nd Military Police Company to be tried for crimes that allegedly occurred in the Baghdad prison in late 2003.

Among the soldiers is Pfc. Lynndie England, who in October gave birth to a child that Army prosecutors claim was the result of an extramarital affair with Graner. Her Fort Hood trial has not yet been scheduled.

From The Associated Press

Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Rai Al-Aam, the king stressed he was not opposed to Shiites and said his comments that Iran was trying to influence the vote and create "Shiite crescent" had been misinterpreted.

Iran — a predominantly Shiite state — called the remarks an insult to Iraqis.

Police also discovered two beheaded Iraqi policemen, their bodies charred from a fire Thursday in a house in Basra used by election officials to organize the

Jan. 30 national vote, a police official said on condition of anonymity.

A Marine belonging to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force was killed in action Thursday while conducting operations in the Al Anbar province in western Iraq.

Despite the mounting attacks and death toll, Iraq's interim leader has insisted the ballot would go ahead as planned.

"We will not allow anything to stop the political process in Iraq," Allawi said Wednesday.

## U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Wednesday, at least 1,338 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,053 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is one lower than the Defense Department's tally.

The British military has reported 76 deaths; Italy, 19; Poland, 16; Spain, 11; Ukraine, nine; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary and Latvia one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,200 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 944 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ A soldier was killed Tuesday when a patrol was attacked in Tal Afar in northern Iraq.

The latest identification reported by the Defense Department:

■ Army Spc. Craig L. Nelson, 21, Bossier City, La., died Dec. 29 at the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., of injuries sustained Dec. 16 when an explosive detonated near his military vehicle in Baghdad, assigned to the Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 156th Army Regiment, Shreveport, La.

# For Marines, life in a dam is like being at sea

A constant hum, plenty of stairs, lots of water — but no movement

BY JOSEPH GIORDANO

Stars and Stripes

**T**he Marines say it's like living in the secret lair of a James Bond villain — at least one of the villains from the slightly dated Sean Connery-Roger Moore era.

Perched at the southern end of Lake Qadisiyah in Iraq's Al Anbar province, along the Euphrates River, the 1st Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment occupies what has to be the most unique base camp in Iraq: a hydroelectric dam.

The base isn't beside the dam, or near the dam. It's inside the massive concrete structure. Office spaces and long concrete hallways have been converted to living areas, a chow hall and weight rooms.

Giant concrete rooms with transformers, high-voltage wires and indecipherable machines festooned with dials and knobs are used as phone centers, a make-shift gym and a chapel.

At the same time, the Marines say, the dam is fully operational and provides power to up to one-third of Iraq's 25 million people.

"It's almost exactly like being on a ship. You've got all the stairwells, there's the constant humming from the turbines, the water all around," said Staff Sgt. Thomas Watson, 38, from Warner Robins, Ga.

The stairwell, or "ladderwell" in Marine-speak, is the most noted feature of the Marines' temporary home. The dam has 11 levels above ground and none of the elevators works. Each level has ceilings of different heights, so sometimes going from one floor to another involves three to four flights of stairs.

For exercise, the Marines run the stairwells and jog along the top of the dam.

"It's definitely a workout," said 1st Lt. James Crabtree. "The spaces get wider as you get toward the base of the dam. There are three levels below ground, but they're off-limits to us."

Deep in the bowels of the structure, the tops of the power turbines are visible in a cavernous space bounded on one side by a wall of pointed metal panels. At the far end of the room, a series of metal symbols, reminiscent of Soviet worker propaganda, extol the virtues of labor and the power provided by the dam.

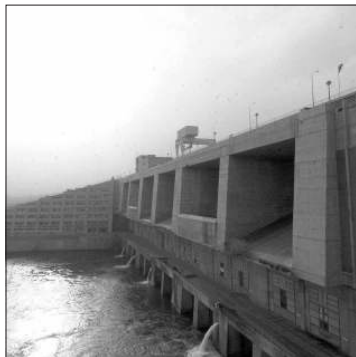
"I had some friends in the unit that occupied the dam before we did," Crabtree said, walking past the turbines. "They described it

*"This is pretty much the safest place in Iraq if you're going to get mortared."*

**Staff Sgt. Thomas Watson**  
1st Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment

Marines backs that up — many have large balconies overlooking the spillways and the Euphrates, which leads downstream a few miles to the city of Haditha.

The balconies are separated from the rooms by large windows and double doors made of glass. The windows and doors have now



The power-generating turbines at the base of Haditha Dam provide power for around one-third of Iraq. The 1st Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment uses the dam structure as its living quarters and base.

to me, but until I got here, I couldn't really picture it."

Small signs in the stairwell landings list the actions Marines should take at several levels of alert, from a possible failure of the dam to a terrorist attack.

According to the Iraqi power plant workers still on duty, the facilities at the dam used to be a resort hotel for honeymooners under the Saddam Hussein regime. A quick look at the rooms used as living quarters for the Marines backs that up — many have large balconies overlooking the spillways and the Euphrates, which leads downstream a few miles to the city of Haditha.

The balconies are separated from the rooms by large windows and double doors made of glass. The windows and doors have now

been reinforced and taped over so they don't shatter in case of a rocket or mortar attack.

Marines say the area around the dam gets hit a few times a week by incoming rounds. At around 6 p.m. Tuesday, a pair of mortar rounds slammed into the ground near the dam. The explosions rattled fixtures and echoed through the cement halls. Marines in the chow hall barely paused, looking up from their T-rations to see if any more rounds were on their way.

"This is pretty much the safest place in Iraq if you're going to get mortared," Watson said.

The Marines also share the facility with a company-size contingent of Azerbaijani soldiers, who provide perimeter security for the base. The Marines admit the Azerbaijanis have it pretty rough. They're on 18-month tours in Iraq and have no mail or telephone links to home.

Of course, the dam has its drawbacks for the Marines as well. Even though it was built just 20 years ago, much of the facility is crumbling. The plumbing doesn't work, so Marines have to use portable toilets and showers on either the first or seventh levels.

Mice are also a problem. In offices and living quarters throughout the dam, Marines have set up mousetraps and have made a sport of figuring out the best bait to lure the rodents. Peanut butter just gets licked off without triggering the trap. The old standby — cheese — works best, if you can get your hands on it.

Paradoxically, the dam experiences occasional power outages. The turbines shut down, the lights flicker and everything goes black. It's the only time the constant hum stops.

And there's the odor. Particularly on the lower levels of the dam, a distinct, pungent sulphur smell permeates the air. At times, it creeps up the stairwells all the way to the top levels.

The Marines aren't sure what causes the smell. But some have a sardonic guess: "We're living right on top of the gates of hell," they say.

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## Warning from Army spells end of war blog

The Associated Press

**PHILADELPHIA** — A military doctor whose Web site chronicled the bloody aftermath of the suicide bombing of a dining tent in Iraq has shut down the site after being told his postings violated Army regulations.

In an e-mail from Iraq on Tuesday, Maj. Michael Cohen, a doctor with the 67th Combat Support Hospital unit, said he received a written warning but was not told which Army regulations were being violated.

A short notice replaced the account on Cohen's site, [www.67csdocs.com](http://www.67csdocs.com).

"Levels above me have ordered, yes ORDERED, me to

*"Levels above me have ordered, yes ORDERED, me to shut down this website."*

**Maj. Michael Cohen**  
Doctor with the 67th Combat Support Hospital unit in a message on his Web site

shut down this website. They cite that the information contained in these pages violates several Army Regulations. I certainly disagree with this," it read.

On his Web log, Cohen had described the chaotic scene after the Dec. 21 mass hall bombing in which 22 people died.

He reported that eventually there were more wounded than emergency room beds.

Lt. Col. Steven Boylan, a spokesman for coalition forces in Iraq, said he could not confirm the investigation into Cohen's blog.

He said the Pentagon allows blogs that do not disrupt unit discipline, make statements on behalf of commanders or the Army, or reveal details that could aid attackers.

"Sometimes a blog might contain subtle nuances from which you can put together a complete picture of our operations, which insurgents can use to attack us," Boylan said.

Since his blog went off-line last week, Cohen, 35, said he has received about 150 e-mails urging him to restore his account of his year as a surgeon at Forward Operating Base Marez.



Marines of the 1st Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment have converted giant open areas in the dam into conference rooms and other facilities.



# Marine accused of desertion, missing again

## Hassoun fails to report for duty; U.S., Lebanon officials have no info on whereabouts

By SAM F. GHATTAS

The Associated Press

BEIRUT, Lebanon — The U.S. Embassy said Thursday it could not confirm that a U.S. Marine who has been charged with desertion had fled to Lebanon and the family of the Lebanese-American was out of reach to comment on the second desertion allegation against the Marine in less than a year.

Cpl. Wassef Ali Hassoun, who vanished in Iraq in June and resurfaced in Beirut two weeks later before returning to the United States to face desertion charges, did not report for duty at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina by a noon deadline on Tuesday.

Hassoun's command has since declared him a deserter, Maj. Matt Morgan, a spokesman for the 4th Marine Expeditionary Brigade, said Wednesday.

Hassoun was in West Jordan, Utah, for about a week in December, Hassoun family spokesman Tarek Nossair said. Nossair said he couldn't confirm broadcast reports that Hassoun may have gone to Canada or Lebanon.

The U.S. Embassy in Beirut said Thursday it could not confirm whether Hassoun has returned to his native Lebanon.

"We have no confirmation that he's here and we have no further comment," said an Embassy spokesperson who asked not to be named.

Attempts to reach Hassoun's family in northern Lebanon were unsuccessful.

Security officials in northern Lebanon,

where Hassoun's family is from, said they have no information on Hassoun possibly returning to the region.

One security official in Beirut, speaking on customary condition of anonymity, said Hassoun had been banned from entering Lebanon after he left the country in July.



Hassoun

Hassoun, a 24-year-old Muslim who has dual Lebanese and American citizenship, was listed as missing in Iraq after he failed to report for duty June 20. A week later, the Arabic news network Al-Jazeera broadcast a photo of Hassoun blindfolded and with a sword behind his head.

One claim said Hassoun was beheaded but later it was retracted.

On July 8, Hassoun contacted U.S. diplomats in Beirut and was taken to the American Embassy where he met his family and was returned to the United States.

How Hassoun ended up in Lebanon remains a mystery. He has made one statement since returning to the United States, saying he was captured and held against

his will by anti-coalition militaries.

During the assault on Fallujah in November, U.S. troops recovered Hassoun's personal belongings in a box in a commercial building.

He was charged in December with desertion, theft, loss of government property and wrongful appropriation of a government vehicle. The desertion count carries a five-year maximum prison sentence and the other counts carry 10-year maximum sentences. The corporal's hearing on the Iraq desertion charge had been delayed until Jan. 13 to allow Hassoun to hire a civilian lawyer to assist his military attorneys.

## Lending a healing hand



SEAN KINMONS/Courtesy of the U.S. Army

Capt. Esther Lazo, a physician assistant with Company C, 225th Forward Support Battalion, checks the breathing pattern of an Iraqi baby during the medical assistance visit at the Al-Ta'meen Health Clinic on Dec. 29. About 40 medical personnel treated more than 160 Iraqis.

## Closing arguments delayed in alleged drowning

By ANGELA K. BROWN

The Associated Press

FORT HOOD, Texas — Closing arguments were delayed Thursday in the military trial of a soldier accused in an Iraqi civilian's drowning death because the jury of Army officers said they wanted to hear from more witnesses.

Jurors said they wanted to hear from witnesses who weren't called to testify in the case, including Army Sgt. 1st Class Tracy Perkins. He's being tried on charges of involuntary manslaughter, aggravated assault, obstruction of justice and lying to investigators. He faces a sentence ranging from nothing to 26 years if convicted.

The judge, Col. Gregory Gross,

said he would research the jurors' request and resume arguments later in the day. Gross rejected the jury's request for documents from previous court hearings in the case and other witness statements. In a court-martial, jurors are allowed to submit questions for witnesses.

Jurors also wanted to hear from Army 1st Lt. Jack Saville, but the judge said that would not happen. Saville is to be tried in March on the same charges as Perkins — as well as a conspiracy charge. Saville faces a maximum sentence of 29 years in prison.

An Iraqi civilian testified Wednesday that he and his cousin were detained while driving back to Samarra with a delivery of

plumbing supplies, then forced at gunpoint into the cold Tigris River as U.S. soldiers laughed.

Marwan Fadel Hassoun said he tried to save his 19-year-old cousin by grabbing his hand, but the powerful current swept Zaidoun Fadel Hassoun away. Marwan said the body was found in the river nearly two weeks later.

Three soldiers called by the defense testified Wednesday that they were looking through night-vision equipment that night and saw two Iraqis on the river bank after the incident.

Under cross-examination, two of the soldiers said they did not reveal that information until last summer because Army investigators, convinced that an Iraqi had died, had intimidated them.

## U.S. military looks into Gitmo abuse allegations

By PAISLEY DODDS

The Associated Press

GUANTANAMO BAY NAVAL BASE, Cuba — Investigators will look into allegations of prisoner abuse at Guantanamo Bay described in recently released FBI documents, authorities said, as a new batch of FBI memos was released.

The U.S. Southern Command in Miami assigned Army Brig. Gen. John T. Furlow to lead the investigation, which could begin as early as this week. The military maintains that most incidents detailed in the FBI memos occurred in 2002 when the prison was just opening, and that some of the interrogation techniques labeled as "aggressive" are no longer in use.

Documents published last month show FBI agents warned the government about abuse and mistreatment when the first prisoners arrived, more than a year before a scandal at an Iraqi Abu Ghraib prison. One letter, written by a senior U.S. Justice Department official, suggested the Pentagon failed to act on the FBI complaints.

"It will be fully investigated," Guantanamo's commanding Army Brig. Gen. Jay Hood said Wednesday, adding that recent articles about allegations have skewed the public's understanding about the mission and the troops' commitment to strict standards.

"Part of that skepticism has occurred because of how ugly Abu Ghraib was," Hood said. "I don't know of anybody wearing uniform who has not, to one degree or another, been sickened by the photos we've all seen. On the other hand, to allege that the 2,000 Americans working here are continuing in an effort to abuse or torture the men under our charge is foolishness."

He said the independent military review was necessary to help and interview people who had left the remote outpost and were no longer under his command.

## Report: Army doctors aided in prison abuse

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — U.S. Army doctors violated the Geneva Conventions by helping intelligence officers carry out abusive interrogations at military detention centers, perhaps participating in torture, according to a report in Thursday's edition of the prestigious New England Journal of Medicine.

Medical personnel helped tailor interrogations to the physical and mental conditions of individual detainees at Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq and the U.S. military prison in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, the report claims. It says medical workers gave interrogators access to patient medical files and that psychiatrists and other physicians collaborated with interrogators and guards who, in turn, deprived detainees of sleep, restricted them to diets of bread and water and exposed them to extremes of heat and cold.

The small team of investigators, including an attorney, will report their findings to the Southern Command's Army Gen. Bantz J. Traddick in February.

The American Civil Liberties Union last month released e-mails obtained under the Freedom of Information Act in which the FBI accused interrogators of inserting lit cigarettes in prisoners' ears and shackling them into fetal positions for hours, forcing them to soil themselves.

Associated Press writers Curt Anderson in Washington and Frank Griffiths in San Juan, Puerto Rico, contributed to this report.

# Fallujah killings prompt lawsuit

By ESTES THOMPSON

The Associated Press

RALEIGH, N.C. — Families of four slain security contractors whose bodies were burned and dragged through the streets of Fallujah, Iraq, have sued the workers' former company.

The families contend that the company, Blackwater Security Consulting, cut corners that led to the men's deaths last week. The lawsuit filed Wednesday seeks unspecified damages.

The workers were sent into Fallujah without proper equipment and personnel to defend the supply convoy they were guarding, according to the civil lawsuit.

"The fact that these four Americans found themselves located in the high-risk, war-torn city of Fallujah without armored vehicles, automatic weapons and fewer than the minimum number of team members was no accident," the lawsuit said.

The lawsuit alleges that one week before the deaths, Blackwater fired a project manager who had insisted that the contractors use armored vehicles.

In a statement issued Wednesday, a spokesman for North Carolina-based Blackwater said the company was "deeply saddened by the tragic loss of our four colleagues as a result of a terrorist act."

"Blackwater hopes that the honor and dignity of our fallen comrades are not diminished by the use of the legal process," spokesman Chris Bertelli said in the statement.

The attack made worldwide headlines, as frenzied and jubilant Iraqi crowds dragged the charred bodies of the four Americans through the streets and strung two of them up from a bridge. Killed were Stephen S. Hulstenson, Mike R. Teague, Jerko Gerald Zovko and Wesley J.K. Batalona.

Blackwater contracted with ESS Support Services Worldwide to provide security for food shipments to U.S. bases in Iraq.

According to the suit, the contract called for security teams to have four armored vehicles and a minimum of six personnel, as well as a heavy machine gun that could fire up to 850 rounds per minute.

But plaintiffs' attorney Dan Callahan said the victims were sent out in unarmored vehicles, without the heavy machine gun and without a map, and got lost.

"When they went out, they got slaughtered," Callahan said.

# Fla. lawmakers push to keep carrier

## Members of Congress oppose DOD proposal to decommission USS Kennedy

By LEO SHANE III

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Three Florida members of Congress announced legislation Wednesday to mandate that the Navy keep 12 aircraft carriers in its fleet, a move prompted by Pentagon proposals to decommission the Florida-based USS Kennedy to save money.

Sens. Bill Nelson, D-Fla., and Mel Martinez, R-Fla., and Rep. Ander Crenshaw, R-Fla., criticized Pentagon officials for considering the proposal, which they say would jeopardize national security, as well as financially devastate northern Florida.

"We should be wise enough to recognize that at a time of war, our nation needs 12 carriers," Martinez said. "We all hope there could be such a time when we don't need this kind of defense, but it's not now."

Navy officials refused to comment on the legislation and budget proposal. Navy Secretary Gordon England spoke to all three lawmakers last week to inform them of the Kennedy's proposed shutdown, which could save about \$1.2 billion.

Nelson said the USS Kitty Hawk, based in

Yokosuka, Japan, is scheduled to be decommissioned in 2008 and its replacement, the USS George H.W. Bush, is two years behind schedule, and won't be in service until 2009.

Crenshaw said that it's one of the smallest savings in the \$30 billion cut in the Pentagon's 2006 budget proposal, but could have the most impact on military readiness. He also criticized the decision to make the cuts in behind-the-scenes budget meetings, rather than leaving the issue for the 2005 Quadrennial Defense Review.

"The leadership in the Pentagon is making a short-sighted decision prompted by budget woes," he said. "If you take this carrier out of service, that's an irreversible decision ... that puts us at tremendous strategic risk."

But Christopher Preble, foreign policy studies director for the Cato Institute and Gulf War Navy veteran, said the usefulness of U.S. carrier

ers against terrorists is limited, since the only obvious concentration of terrorists to launch large-scale attacks against was in Afghanistan.

"For them to make the argument that carriers are essential for the war on terror is absurd," he said. "There are things that the carrier can do that no other platform can, but you can say that about most of the U.S. military."

The Kennedy, based at Mayport Naval Station, returned to Florida in December after a six-month mission in the Middle East. The carrier has a crew of more than 3,100, and Crenshaw estimates its presence brings about \$250 million annually into the Jacksonville area.

The 36-year-old carrier underwent \$350 million in repairs last spring and is scheduled to undergo another \$378 million overhaul later this year.

He also pointed to 2003 and 2002 Navy posture statements, which note that "real-world experience and analysis indicate that a carrier force of 15 ships is necessary."

Preble said in the past Congress and the White House have overturned similar defense department cuts, but described the legislation as the sharpest anti-empiric move.

E-mail Leo Shane at: shane@stripes.com



Preble



# Talking politics in Iraq

Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., talks with soldiers at Camp Al Tahrir in Baghdad on Wednesday.

During his visit, Kerry discussed sports, the presidential election and the state of the war in Iraq.

From left: Spc. Michelle Lacourse, 126th Aviation Battalion; Pfc. Kevin Cole, 356th Engineer Battalion; Spc. Michael Foly, 356th Engineer Battalion; and Sgt. Raymond Hegarty, 356th Engineer Battalion.

COURTESY OF THE U.S. ARMY/AP

# Lakenheath airmen deploying to Mideast

By RON JENSEN

Stars and Stripes

RAF LAKENHEATH, England — More than 1,000 airmen from the 48th Fighter Wing have begun deploying to support the ongoing international war on terror and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

F-15E Strike Eagles from the 494th Fighter Squadron are among those who will deploy, said Brig. Gen. Mark T. Matthews, the wing commander.

"January is the heavy month for deploying people out," Matthews said Thursday. "We started rotating people out in late December."

The deployed airmen will be stationed in Afghanistan, Iraq and throughout the Central Command area of responsibility, he said. CENTCOM covers 25 nations from the Horn of Africa to the Arabian Gulf region and into Central Asia.

Most of the Lakenheath airmen will be part of the four-month rotation cycle for air expeditionary forces, but some have orders for 179 days, he said.

Airmen will deploy longer are typically in higher demand fields, such as security forces, Air Force officials have said.

Up to 20,000 Air Force members deploy around the globe in each rotation cycle, according to the Air Force Web site.

The 48th's mission will be the typical Air Force fighter mission — providing air support for the troops on the ground.

Matthews said the Jan. 30 elections in Iraq would probably generate a lot of trouble from insurgents who oppose a democratic government. He said the area would remain "hot" for the time being.

The aircraft could be called upon to support ground offensives or provide an airborne weapon system for ambushed convoys or patrols.

At the same time, the wing is sending aircraft and about 100 people from the 493rd Fighter Squadron to Iceland to maintain an air presence for NATO in the North Atlantic, a mission the Air Force has performed for decades to support the island nation.

That deployment is also a normal four-month rotation.

"It's a bit of our hide," Matthews said of the departure of so many troops and aircraft. "There will be a noticeable dent in our footprint here."

The deployments will put a strain on troops who remain behind, Matthews said. They will work longer hours and do more tasks than normal.

However, he said, it is rare that all three squadrons are together at RAF Lakenheath, where about 5,000 active-duty members are stationed.

"It puts a lot of stress on our people here," he said. "In fact, I worry more about our people here than our people deployed."

He said the heavy operations tempo facing the Air Force and the rest of the military requires the service learn how to operate garri- sons with much of the population deployed.

"I think we're still learning as an Air Force how to do this," he said.

Organizations such as the Family Support Center and the 48th Medical Group, as well as commanders and senior enlisted leaders, will be on the watch for indicators of excessive stress, such as increases in driving under the influence of alcohol or domestic abuse, he said.

E-mail Ron Jensen at: Jensenr@mail.stripes.com

## IN THE STATES

# Justice nominee draws criticism for prison abuse

BY MARK SHERMAN  
The Associated Press



Gonzales

rights.

"I will no longer represent only the White House. I will represent the United States of America and

its people. I understand the difference between the two roles," President Bush's counsel told the Senate Judiciary Committee.

His assurances did little to placate Democrats.

"America's troops and citizens are at greater risk" because of administration policies that are "tantamount to torture," said Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont, the panel's top Democrat.

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., told Gonzales that policies he supported or helped formulate "have been used by the administration, the military and the CIA to justify torture and Geneva Convention violations by military and civilian personnel."

Despite the Democratic fireworks, Gonzales' nomination was widely expected to be confirmed by the GOP-led Senate. Even his detractors praised the rags-to-riches story of the Texas-raised son of Mexican im-



Opponents of Attorney General nominee Alberto Gonzales appear at a Senate Judiciary Committee confirmation hearing on Thursday.

migrants.

"The road you traveled... all the way to the White House is a tribute to you and your family," Leahy said.

Gonzales, 49, seated by himself at the witness table, answered pointed questions in a calm, even voice. His wife, three sons, mother-in-law and a brother sat behind him in the first row of the audience.

Before Gonzales' confirmation hearing got under way, the White House refused to provide senators additional documents on his role in the decision to allow aggressive interrogations of terrorism detainees, adding to the ad-

ministration's confrontation with congressional Democrats over the now-repudiated policies.

David Leitch, the White House's deputy counsel, told committee Democrats in a letter released Thursday that the administration had already turned over all of the documents it plans to.

Asked about the torture scandal at Iraq's Abu Ghraib prison, Gonzales said he was "sickened and outraged by those photos." But he declined to give a legal opinion on the alleged abuses, suggesting he didn't want to prejudge a possible criminal case if he becomes attorney general.

## Agriculture nod OK'd

WASHINGTON — A Senate Agriculture Committee majority on Thursday approved the nomination of Nebraska Gov. Mike Johanns as the nation's 28th agriculture secretary.

Johanns is first of President Bush's second-term nominees to clear a Senate committee.

Johanns will resign as governor upon confirmation.

## Agenda for schools

WASHINGTON — White House domestic policy chief Margaret Spellings, who helped set the national agenda for schools, began the task Thursday of defining how she would lead them.

Spellings, nominated by President Bush to be the country's eighth education secretary, went before the Senate education committee Thursday to take questions about her views.

## Growing trade deficit

WASHINGTON — U.S. Commerce Secretary nominee Carlos M. Gutierrez is promising to aggressively fight the unfair trade practices of foreign nations and to speed up the government's handling of individual cases. America's annual trade deficit expected to top \$600 billion. American companies have lost 2.7 million jobs over the past four years.

From The Associated Press

Message for our men and women in uniform...

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# Bush touts case for medical liability reform

BY SCOTT LINDLAU  
The Associated Press

COLLINSVILLE, Ill. — President Bush on Wednesday opened a new drive for caps on medical malpractice awards, contending the limits would lower health care costs. Opponents said such ceilings would merely shield doctors and others who provide poor health care.

"I believe the voters made their position clear on Election Day on medical liability reform," Bush said, citing his re-election as evidence of support for a proposal that has passed the House but failed in the Senate.

The renewed battle revived a partisan debate about whether Bush's victory in November gave him a second-term mandate to push his big-ticket items through Congress.

Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., criticized Bush's medical malpractice proposal as well as the president's claim of having won a new political capital.



President Bush shakes hands with Dr. Eric Falconer after delivering his remarks Wednesday that continue to push for limits on jury awards for medical mistakes at the Gateway Center in Collinsville, Ill.

"Barely two months after promising to unify and heal the country after a bitter election, the president's again pushing for legisla-

tion that will further divide it," Kennedy said.

"The president's medical malpractice plan is nothing but a shameful shield for drug compa-

nies and HMOs who hurt people through negligence," Kennedy said.

Bush made his case in Madison County, across the Mississippi River from St. Louis. The county has been called the "medical hell-hole" of the nation by the American Tort Reform Association last year because of a reputation for huge awards won by plaintiffs.

Lawyers in the area say the legal situation has been exaggerated and that large malpractice awards have been scarce.

"The United States Congress needs to pass real medical liability reform this year," Bush said, slapping his lectern with an open palm to emphasize his point.

Behind him, the White House advance team arranged medical coats. The president wants to place a limit of \$250,000 on noneconomic damages, or the pain and suffering portions of malpractice awards.

Bush would impose no limits on economic losses suffered at the hands of bad doctors.

## State of the state



**California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger delivers his State of the State address Wednesday before a joint session of the Legislature at the state Capitol in Sacramento, Calif.**  
Schwarzenegger used the speech to call for spending cuts in order to close an \$8.1 million deficit.

## Health magazine names Seattle as fittest city; Houston ranks as fattest

The Associated Press

SEATTLE — Must be something in the coffee.

Seattle has been named the fittest city in the United States in the February issue of Men's Fitness magazine, leaping past the buff competition from Honolulu, Colorado Springs, San Francisco and Denver.

Exercising faithfully and shunning fast food boosted Seattle to the top from No. 6 last year, Men's Fitness Editor in Chief Neal Boulton said.

"Eighty-five percent of Seattle residents get some exercise every month, and that's a really significant thing," Boulton said.

The city's jittery love affair with espresso might fuel some of that activity, he noted. "There's not only a lot of it, it's pretty darn strong."

In its nonscientific Seventh Annual Fittest and Fattest Cities Report, the magazine compares 50 cities by weighing 14 factors, including fast food restaurants per capita, TV watching, air quality and parks. In Seattle, for example, the magazine says sporting goods stores and gyms outnum-

### The fittest

1. Seattle
2. Honolulu
3. Colorado Springs, Colo.
4. San Francisco
5. Denver
6. Portland, Ore.
7. Sacramento, Calif.
8. Tucson, Ariz.
9. San Diego
10. Albuquerque, N.M.
11. Boston
12. Virginia Beach, Va.
13. Indianapolis, Minn.
14. Fresno, Calif.
15. Milwaukee, Wis.
16. Omaha, Neb.
17. San Jose, Calif.
18. Jacksonville, Fla.
19. Austin, Texas
20. Oakland, Calif.
21. Los Angeles
22. Arlington, Texas
23. Washington, D.C.
24. Cleveland
25. Nashville-Davidson, Tenn.

### The fattest

1. Houston
2. Philadelphia
3. Detroit
4. Memphis, Tenn.
5. Chicago
6. Dallas
7. New Orleans
8. New York
9. Las Vegas
10. San Antonio, Texas
11. El Paso, Texas
12. Phoenix
13. Indianapolis
14. Fort Worth, Texas
15. Mesa, Ariz.
16. Columbus, Ohio
17. Wichita, Kan.
18. Kansas City, Mo.
19. Miami
20. Long Beach, Calif.
21. Oklahoma City, Okla.
22. Tulsa, Okla.
23. Atlanta
24. Charlotte, N.C.
25. Baltimore

ber fast food joints — a key statistic.

Houston was named the fattest city for the fourth time in five years, followed by Philadelphia, Detroit, Memphis and Chicago.

Seattle's claim to the fitness crown makes sense to Doug Sherry

and his Wheaton Terrier, Bing, who walk the three-mile path around Seattle's Green Lake every day, rain or shine.

His advice for those seeking to emulate Seattle's healthy ways? "Enjoy the outdoors," Sherry said. "And get a dog."

## Pilots call for more info on laser risk

BY LESLIE MILLER  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Officials with airline pilots unions say the government should be doing more to alert them to incidents involving lasers and to provide guidance about how best to protect themselves against beams that can blind.

At least eight recent incidents involve lasers being pointed at aircraft cockpits as they approached for landings. No one was hurt and all the aircraft landed safely.

Denis Breslin, an American Airlines captain, said pilots learned about the incidents only through the news media. He said the government should have a way to alert pilots so they can take precautions.

"Pilots want a generalized warning and training. I think that's not too much to ask," said Breslin, first vice president of the Allied Pilots Association.

Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman Laura Brown said the agency is very concerned about the safety of pilots, passengers and the rest of the flight crew. "We're putting the finishing touches on fresh advice for pilots," she said.

An FAA study released in June found that most pilots subjected to a laser flash in a simulator reported temporary visual impairment and brief distraction.

Of the hundreds of cases in the past in which airplane cockpits have been illuminated by lasers, none resulted in an accident, the study said.

## Democrats to force debate on Ohio vote in Congress

BY ALAN FRAM  
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A small group of Democrats agreed Thursday to force House and Senate debates on Election Day problems in Ohio before letting the U.S. Congress certify President Bush's win over Sen. John Kerry.

Sen. Barbara Boxer, a California Democrat, signed a challenge mounted by House Democrats to Ohio's 20 electoral votes, which put Bush over the top. By law, a challenge signed by members of the House and Senate requires

both chambers to meet separately for up to two hours to consider it. Lawmakers are allowed to speak for no more than five minutes each.

While Bush's victory is not in jeopardy, the Democratic challenge will force Congress to interrupt tallying the Electoral College vote, which was scheduled to begin Thursday. It would be only the second time since 1877 that the House and Senate were forced into separate meetings to consider electoral votes.

"I have concluded that objecting to the electoral votes from Ohio is the only immediate way to bring these issues to light by allowing

you to have a two-hour debate to let the American people know the facts surrounding Ohio's election," Boxer wrote in a letter to Rep. Stephanie Tubo Jones, a leader of the Democratic effort.

The action seems certain to leave Bush's victory intact because both Republican-controlled chambers would have to uphold the challenge for Ohio's votes to be invalidated. But supporters of the drive hope their move will shine a national spotlight on the Ohio voting problems.

Bush defeated Kerry, 286-252, with 270 electoral votes needed for victory.



# U.S. midsection recovering from winter storms

BY NATHANIEL HERNANDEZ

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — A winter storm that put much of the Midwest in the dark inched its way east Thursday, spreading a treacherous mix of freezing rain and snow from the Great Lakes to New England.

The forecast called for up to 6 inches of snow by evening, considerably less than the amounts that fell Wednesday across the country's midsection. The same system had dumped up to 3 feet of snow in the mountains around Los Angeles earlier in the week.

The snow, sleet and freezing rain were part of a mass of cold air that dropped the temperature to a Jan. 5 record low of 39 below zero in Grand Forks, N.D. Embarrass, Minn., hit 43 below, the National Weather Service said.

Michigan recorded some of the heaviest snowfall, with towns up north digging out from under a foot of it. In Detroit, icy roads were blamed for a school bus accident that sent eight students to a hospital to be checked for injuries.

In Illinois, some northern locations got up to 9 inches of snow.

Up to 2 inches of rain fell in some southern counties, prompting flood warnings.

At Chicago's O'Hare International Airport, where more than 6 inches of snow fell, travelers coped with more than 600 canceled flights and three-hour delays. Twenty-one flights were canceled at the city's other airport, Midway, according to aviation officials.



ARIZONA DAILY SUN/UP

Alex Rhode, 8, and his dad Jeff, left, shovel snow from their roof Wednesday in Flagstaff, Ariz.

Weather-related traffic deaths included one each in Colorado, Nebraska, South Dakota and Indiana. Icy roads also may have been a factor in accidents that killed two in Michigan and at least nine in Oklahoma, including a Tulsa woman and her four children.

A search resumed Wednesday for two people who had been in a car that was found washed into a creek in Missouri, and one man was still missing after an Arizona flash flood that killed another man.

School closings were reported from New Mexico to New Jersey, and hundreds of travelers were stranded across the country.

Thick ice coated roads, trees and utility poles across Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, Oklahoma, Indiana and the Texas Panhandle.

# Conviction overturned for mother found guilty of drowning her 5 kids

BY MICHAEL GRACZY

The Associated Press

HOUSTON — Andrea Yates' capital murder convictions for drowning her children were overturned Thursday by an appeals court, which ruled that a prosecution witness' erroneous testimony about a nonexistent TV episode could have been crucial.

Yates' lawyers had argued at a hearing last month before a three-judge panel of the First Court of Appeals in Houston that psychiatrist Park Dietz was wrong when he mentioned an episode of the TV show "Law & Order" involving a woman found innocent by reason of insanity for drowning her children.

After jurors found Yates guilty, attorneys in the case and jurors learned no such episode existed.

"We conclude that there is a reasonable likelihood that Dr. Dietz's false testimony could have

affected the judgment of the jury," the court ruled. "We further conclude that Dr. Dietz's false testimony affected the substantial rights of appellant."

The appellate ruling returns the case for a new trial, although prosecutors said they hoped instead to successfully appeal Thursday's ruling.

"We fully intend to pursue a motion for a rehearing," said Harris County Assistant District Attorney Alan Curry, who argued the case before the appeals court. "Barring that, we'll continue to appeal to the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. We still believe we have a good shot to prevail in appeal."

Jurors in 2002 sentenced Yates to life in prison in the 2001 deaths of three of her five children. She was not tried in the deaths of the other two.

The defense's appeal cited 19 errors from her trial, but the appeals court said since the false tes-

timony issue reversed the conviction, it was not ruling on the other matters. Among other things, Yates attorneys had claimed the Texas insanity standard is unconstitutional.

"We agree that this case does not involve the state's knowing use of perjured testimony," the appeals court said in its ruling. A woman answering the telephone at Dietz's Newport Beach, Calif., office said Thursday there was no immediate comment from him or his firm. He had testified the episode aired shortly before the drownings, and other testimony during the trial had indicated that Yates watched the series.

A wet and bedraggled Yates called police to her home on June 20, 2001, and showed them the bodies of her five children: Noah, 7; John, 5; Paul, 3; Luke, 2; and 6-month-old Mary. She had called them into the bathroom and drowned them one by one.

According to testimony, Yates was overwhelmed by motherhood, considered herself a bad mother, and had attempted suicide and been hospitalized for depression.

Prosecutors acknowledged she was mentally ill but argued that she knew right from wrong and was thus not legally insane.

Dietz is a nationally known expert who also took part in such high profile cases as those of Susan Smith, convicted of killing her two children in a South Carolina lake, and serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer, and "Unabomber" Ted Kaczynski.

# Microsoft offering users free antivirus software download

BY TED BRIDIS

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Microsoft Corp., whose popular Windows software is a frequent target for Internet viruses, is offering a free security program to remove the most dangerous infections from computers.

The program, with monthly updates, is a step toward plans by Microsoft to sell full-blown antivirus software later this year.

Microsoft said Thursday that consumers can download the new security program from the company's Web site. "We'll call it **Microsoft.com** — and that updated versions will be offered automatically and free each month. It will be available starting Tuesday."

Also being offered is a free program to remove "spyware," a category of irritating programs that secretly monitor the activities of Internet users and can cause sluggish computer performance or popup ads.

Microsoft said the virus-removal program will not prevent computer infections and was never intended to replace the need for traditional antivirus software, such

as flagship products from McAfee Inc. or Symantec Corp.

But a senior Microsoft executive confirmed the company's plans to sell its own antivirus software, which would compete against programs from McAfee, Symantec and others.

Microsoft purchased a Romanian antivirus firm, GetCAD Software Srl, for an undisclosed amount in 2003. Industry rivals expect Microsoft's formal entry into the market as early as the spring.

"We will have a standalone antivirus product that is one of the things you can buy from Microsoft, but we're not announcing anything today," said Rich Kaplan, vice president for Microsoft's security business and technology unit.

The offers of free virus- and spyware-removal tools were intended to convince consumers that Microsoft is working to improve its software's security, Kaplan said.

Microsoft and other companies occasionally have offered separate programs to disinfect specific viruses. Microsoft promised its new removal tool will target a variety of infections and will be updated each month to recognize new ones.

# Warning: Labels may tickle your funny bone

BY DAVID N. GOODMAN

The Associated Press

DETROIT — The sign on the toilet brush says it best: "Do not use for personal hygiene."

That admonition was the winner of an anti-lawsuit group's annual contest for the wackiest consumer warning label of the year.

The sponsor, Michigan Law-suit Abuse Watch, says the goal is "to reveal how lawsuits, and concern about lawsuits, have created a need for common sense warnings on products."

The \$500 first prize went to Ed Gyetval, of Oldcastle, Ontario, who submitted the toilet-brush label. A \$250 second prize went to Matt Johnson, of Naperville, Ill., for a label on a children's scooter that said,

"This product moves when used."

A \$100 third prize went to Ann Marie Taylor, of Camden, S.C., who submitted a warning from a digital thermometer that said, "Once used rectally, the thermometer should not be used orally."

The leader of a group that opposes the campaign to limit lawsuits admits that while some warning labels may seem stupid, even dumb warnings can do good.

"There are many cases of warning labels saving lives," said Joanne Doroshov, executive director of the Center for Justice and Democracy in New York. "It's much better to be very cautious ... than to be afraid of being made fun of by a tort reform group."

# U.S. looks for man who tried to buy explosives

WASHINGTON — Federal authorities are looking for a man using a Middle Eastern name and possibly bogus construction credentials to try to purchase large quantities of an explosive ingredient used by Timothy McVeigh in the Oklahoma City bombing.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives said there was no indication that terrorism was involved, but the agency was still checking information that came from a company in Canada that reported the attempted purchase as suspicious. The suspect also made several e-mail inquiries to vendors, seeking to buy between 500 to 1,000 metric tons of the explosive — a quantity larger than McVeigh used to bomb the Oklahoma City federal building in April 1995 but smaller than amounts companies typically might buy in bulk for construction, explosives or farm work.

McVeigh used a combination of ammonium nitrate and fuel oil with a detonation cord to make his bomb, which killed more than 160 people.

From The Associated Press

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## IN THE WORLD

# Summit tackles health issues for survivors

## Leaders fear tsunami death toll could double if refugees' basic needs aren't met

BY MICHAEL C. CORDE

The Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia — Amid warnings that the anticipated 150,000 death toll from the Asian tsunami disaster could jump sharply without fresh aid, world leaders staggered by the calamity sought Thursday to figure out the best way to help victims — and to prevent such a catastrophe from happening again.

As donors held an emergency summit in Indonesia, relief workers scrambled to move aid to areas of Sumatra, the Indonesian island hit hardest by the massive earthquake and giant waves that crashed ashore Dec. 26. Volunteers hauled sacks of rice and instant noodles into trucks en route to the hungry even as U.S. helicopters buzzed overhead on their way to deliver supplies to Sumatra's isolated communities.

A radical Islamic group set up a relief camp in Sumatra, raising fears of agitation against U.S. and Australian military teams gearing up to assist victims. The militants, once headed by an al-Qaida-linked terror chief and infamous for attacking the Christian missionary on Indonesia's far-flung islands, insisted they would not interfere with foreign troops — as long as they kept strictly to humanitarian operations.

South Korean relief workers helping victims of Asia's tsunami disaster may become targets of terror attacks, the government warned Thursday.

South Korea sent a "request to related countries" to take security measures for the aid workers, said Lee Kyu-hyung, a spokesman of Seoul's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

**For more photos and stories on military relief operations, visit [www.stripes.com](http://www.stripes.com)**

He did not elaborate, and it was not immediately clear whether South Koreans were more at risk than aid workers from other countries.

World leaders conferred in Jakarta about how to transform one of the largest aid packages ever assembled — nearly \$4 billion in pledges — into food for the hungry and shelter for the homeless. U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan urged nations to immediately come forward with the billions they've promised and to break with past practices of promising much and delivering little.

"The disaster was so brutal, so quick, and so far-reaching, that we are still struggling to comprehend it," Annan said. "We will never know the exact magnitude of how many men, women and children perished on 26 December."

Australia leads the world with a total aid pledge of \$810 million, followed by Japan and the United States.

President Bush personally contributed \$10,000 from his personal funds to the relief effort, his spokesman said Wednesday.

U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said America would take a wait-and-see attitude before pledging more cash to tsunami relief.

"These are not insignificant numbers," Powell told reporters. The World Health Organization



Tsunami victims clean the destroyed area around their old homes at the eastern coastal village of Kattankulady, near Batticaloa, Sri Lanka, on Thursday. Getting aid to millions of tsunami victims is a race against time, and nations must immediately come forward with the money they pledged, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said Thursday during an emergency summit held in Jakarta, Indonesia.

said that if basic needs — particularly access to safe drinking water — were not restored by the end of this week, infectious diseases could kill tens of thousands. The confirmed death toll in the region stands at 140,000, and senior U.N. officials have predicted it will reach 150,000.

Epidemics could claim a far higher number.

"We now estimate that as many as 150,000 people are at extreme risk if a major disease outbreak in

the affected areas occurs," said WHO Director-General Dr. Lee Jong-wook.

For the moment, though, the threat of an outbreak of water-borne disease is being held in check by medical aid flooding into the region, U.N. officials said. While there are cases of diarrhea, respiratory and skin diseases and mental trauma, there have been no major outbreaks of disease in the devastated Aceh region, the U.N. health agency said Thurs-

day.

But officials are concerned that unless this aid is sustained, the system could collapse. Rushing water purification tablets to survivors and building rudimentary toilets remain the focus of efforts to fend off deadly disease outbreaks in devastated communities.

The U.N. health organization is warning that hygiene in the hundreds of refugee camps that have sprung up around the region is the biggest disease concern.

## Relief effort costing U.S. military \$6 million daily

BY ROBERT BURNS

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon is spending about \$6 million a day to operate the fleet of ships, aircraft and other military resources that have joined the tsunami relief effort in South Asia, a spokesman said Thursday.

Army Lt. Col. Gary Keck, a Pentagon public affairs officer, said the \$6 million per day covers a U.S. contingent of about 13,000 military personnel, of which about 12,000 are aboard 17 Navy ships in the region hit by the Dec. 26 earthquake and resulting tsunami.

The U.S. military's contribution to the humanitarian effort is possibly its largest in history; it is separate from the \$350 million that President Bush has pledged in U.S. government assistance.

The latest ship to join the effort was the USNS Mercy, a hospital ship that set sail Wednesday

evening from San Diego. It is initially staffed to support 250 patient beds but could be expanded to 1,000 beds with additional medical staff. The humanitarian organization Project HOPE has expressed interest in providing medical staff for the Mercy, which will take about 30 days to reach south Asia.

The biggest share of the estimated \$6 million-a-day cost is for the U.S. Abraham Lincoln battle group. Adm. Thomas Fargo, commander of U.S. Pacific Command, has said it costs about \$2.5 million a day to operate the Lincoln group, which has 17 helicopters aboard.

Another major force in the area is Expeditionary Strike Group 5, led by the USS Bonhomme Richard, an amphibious assault ship that arrived Thursday off the northwest coast of Sumatra with 1,300 Marines aboard.



Second Class Petty Officer Kenneth Rowe, from Apple Valley, Calif., stands in the door as his helicopter prepares to land to deliver aid at the tsunami devastated town of Kuede Teumon in Indonesia on Thursday.

## U.N. official critical of U.S. relief actions

The Associated Press

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia — The U.N. official coordinating relief efforts on Sumatra island complained Thursday that the U.S. military's aid mission was failing to coordinate and provide critical information to other relief organizations struggling to help survivors of the tsunami.

Michael Elmqvist said that while American helicopters were speeding relief supplies to villages isolated by the Dec. 26 disaster, their crews were not spending enough time on the ground to assess survivors' needs.

"They don't stop their engines. They're on the ground for five minutes," Elmqvist told reporters in the provincial capital of Banda Aceh, on the hard-hit northern tip of Sumatra.

The U.S. relief operation is one of the largest in its military history and has won praise for reaching villages devastated by the earthquake and tsunami, which washed out roads and destroyed bridges. But Elmqvist said he couldn't be sure what the U.S. helicopters were delivering.

"I don't know what they had on board," Elmqvist said. "We don't get any feedback."

The United Nations has only had "brief contact" with the American military, Elmqvist said, adding that he would "like to see it intensified over the next few days."

Elmqvist said that relief officials planned to start work Friday on building at least four large refugee centers that could hold up to 8,500 people. He said he hoped the first camps could be opened within a week.

# UNICEF: Gangs may prey on Indonesian orphans

By BETH GARDINER  
The Associated Press

JAKARTA, Indonesia — Fearful child-trafficking gangs will exploit the chaos of the tsunami disaster, Indonesia has placed restrictions on youngsters leaving the country, ordered police commanders to be on the lookout for trafficking and posted special guards in refugee camps.

UNICEF and other child welfare groups warn that the gangs — who are well-established in Indonesia — may well be whisking orphaned children into trafficking networks, selling them into forced labor or even sexual slavery in wealthier neighboring countries such as Malaysia and Singapore.

On Wednesday, UNICEF spokesman John Budd, based in Banda Aceh, said the group had two confirmed reports of attempted child trafficking, but he did not intend to provide any further details.

Such trafficking, if true, would vastly deepen the suffering of children already struck hard by the Dec. 26 massive earthquake and tsunami. Indonesia estimates that 35,000 children on Sumatra island's Aceh province lost one or both parents to the tsunami.

Fueling the suspicions, many



A child orphaned by the Dec. 26 earthquake and tsunami cries as aid workers escort the baby into the Halim Airport terminal on Sunday in Jakarta, Indonesia, for treatment. Criminal gangs are taking advantage of the chaos in Sumatra's tsunami-stricken Aceh province to whisk orphaned children into trafficking networks, selling them into forced labor or even sexual slavery, UNICEF says. Hoping to prevent widespread smuggling of vulnerable youngsters, the government has banned Acehese children under 16 from leaving Indonesia.

Indonesians have received mobile phone text messages this week inviting them to adopt orphans from Aceh. The police are investigating the messages.

It's unclear whether such messages are pranks, real adoption of-

fers or linked in some way to trafficking networks.

But child welfare experts warn the messages could be a sign that children are being removed from the province, reducing their chances of being reunited with

relatives or surviving parents who may be searching for them.

"I'm sure it's happening," said Birgitte Lund-Henriksen, child protection chief in UNICEF's Indonesia office. "It's a perfect opportunity for these gangs to move in."

Officials concede that so far they have little hard evidence of specific cases, but say the aftermath of a natural disaster is a perfect breeding ground for such traffic.

In Thailand, Foreign Minister Surakiat Sathirathai said Tuesday that his government was working closely with hospitals to prevent human trafficking gangs from taking advantage of the situation, although he stressed that there was no firm indication that they were.

The threat of trafficking appears more serious in Indonesia than any of the other southern Asian nations hit by the tsunami, probably because the scale of death and destruction is greatest here and the territory more remote, UNICEF director Carol Bellamy told The Associated Press in an interview Tuesday.

Making matters worse, the hardest-hit area in Indonesia's Aceh — is not far from the port city of Medan and nearby island of Batam, which are well-known transit points for gang-shipping children and teenagers out of Indonesia.

"This is a situation that lends itself to this kind of exploitation," Bellamy said. "Our concern here is ... whether these children are frankly turned into child slaves, if you will, or abused and exploited."

## Marines on way to Iraq welcome aid mission

By ERIC TALMADGE  
The Associated Press

ABOARD THE USS BONHOMME RICHARD — When Lance Corp. Keith Delatorre took this warship in San Diego a month ago, he thought he was on his way to Iraq. Now, he's loading up his gear for a very different mission — bringing badly needed aid to Indonesians left isolated by the tsunami that battered coastlines along the Indian Ocean.

Delatorre, who celebrated his 22nd birthday Wednesday, said he was happy for the new orders, which came down two days after the disaster struck. The USS Bonhomme Richard was making a port call at the Pacific island of Guam.

"We just need to get the mission done," he said, sweating in the heat of the ship's hull. "A lot of guys would say they want to go right to Iraq. But I'm kind of glad. There's not much chance of dying here."

The Bonhomme Richard and another warship brimming with Marines, helicopters and heavy equipment arrived off the shores of northwest Sumatra on Thursday to begin its part of what is possibly the largest U.S. military humanitarian aid operation ever.

"We were training for Iraq, so getting diverted to a humanitarian-



U.S. Marines of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit embarked on the USS Bonhomme Richard prepare pallets of relief aid to be airlifted from Medan, Indonesia, for distribution in the country. The USS Bonhomme Richard is participating in Operation Unified Assistance, providing humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations to tsunami victims.

an mission is like night and day," said Delatorre, of Pleasant Hill, Calif.

The Bonhomme Richard, with 1,300 Marines aboard, and the smaller USS Duluth are joining the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier and its battle group in the relief effort for the northwestern Sumatra province of Aceh, where as many as 100,000 people are believed to have been killed by the Dec. 26 catastrophe. Another ship, the USS Rushmore, was also on its way.

The Marines are planning to set up farther south than the Lincoln to reach villages there that may not yet have made contact with the outside world.

Their arrival strongly boosts the relief efforts. Along with dozens of helicopters, the ships carry

large landing craft that float on cushions of air and can come ashore on virtually any kind of beach. Once ashore, the Marines could offer the manpower and equipment needed to build shelters, clear roads and airstrips, and distribute clean drinking water.

Working out the details of the operation has been delicate, however.

Though originally assigned to spearhead relief efforts on Sri Lanka, the Bonhomme Richard was diverted to Sumatra after the government in Colombo scaled down its relief request. An intensive airlift by helicopters from this ship to bring supplies out of the overwhelmed airport in Medan on Wednesday raised concerns from local officials that the military was crowding out commercial flights.

## USFK to help rush supplies, provide medical evacuation

By FRANKLIN FISHER  
Stars and Stripes

PYONGTAEK, South Korea — The U.S. military in South Korea "is already deploying medical and heavy-cargo helicopters and several hundred troops to join the multinational relief effort in tsunami-stricken South Asia, officials said Thursday.

Departure dates and times were pending as of Thursday night, according to the U.S. military command in South Korea. The Army's 17th Aviation Brigade will send eight CH-47 Chinook heavy-lift helicopters and about 125 soldiers to the region.

The troops, from the brigade's 2nd Battalion, 52nd Aviation Regiment, include aircrews, mechanics and supply troops.

"The Chinook helicopters, as heavy-lift aircraft, will provide significant capability of getting into remote areas in a very efficient, effective way," Lt. Col. Tom Budzyna, chief spokesman for the U.S. Army in Seoul, told Stars and Stripes. The Chinooks will be able to move large quantities of cargo. Combined with other aircraft assigned to the task, they'll increase the ability to rush supplies and other cargo, he said.

Also preparing to deploy but awaiting orders as of Thursday were about 200 troops from a "dust-off," or medical evacuation, helicopter company of the Army's 18th Medical Command. About half of that number are aviators, the balance mainly are helicopter maintenance and medical supply troops, Budzyna said. The medevac unit is going "be-

cause they have the medical evacuation capability to quickly transport people that need medical attention to a facility that can give it to them," said Budzyna.

"Even though the major wave of catastrophe has hit, there's still the fear of disease that could spread," he said. "So the medical evacuation, or dust-off, company will be able to provide that evacuation" for those needing it.

On Wednesday, officials at Osan Air Base in South Korea said the U.S. 7th Air Force will deploy two 12-member teams of engineers from the 545th Red Horse Squadron to Utaap, Thailand, to determine runways' usability. Later, one team is to go from there to Sri Lanka, the other to Indonesia.

USFK officials said Thursday the deploying South Korea-based Army and Air Force elements will become part of Combined Support Force 536, which is relieving the military side of relief efforts in the region.

Combined Support Force will coordinate those efforts with the U.S. State Department, U.S. Agency for International Development, host nations and humanitarian organizations. In addition, the planned deployments, USFK said it was coordinating its plans closely with the South Korean government. "USFK's humanitarian deployments will not affect the security and deterrent capability of Combined Forces Command and USFK," said Army Col. MaryAnn O'Donnings, USFK chief spokeswoman.

E-mail Franklin Fisher at: ffisher@pstripes.osd.mil

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## OPINION

## Islamic world is also at conflict with itself

BY MARTIN SCHRAM

Scripps Howard News Service

When we look back, one year from now, we will see that the big story of 2005 was nothing like the mild, myopic goulash that the print pundits and TV chattering heads just dished us as New Year's predictions about Bush-this, Hillary-that, Iraq-this, Social Security-that.

The big story will be that 2005 was the year of Islam vs. Islam.

It will be a year of Islamic conflicts that will erupt explosively in various ways around the planet. Islamic fundamentalist moderates, monarchs, military and nonmilitary autocrats who are fundamentalist and not-so-fundamentalist will clash in Saudi Arabia, the now-forming Palestinian state in Gaza and the West Bank, Afghanistan, Pakistan and, to varying degrees, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. These will be clashes of ideology, militancy and just plain power-grabbing.

Much has changed in the Islamic world in recent months. In some areas, voices of authority and moderation have begun speaking with increased urgency and persuasive power. But militants, most notably al-Qaida, have begun to turn their terror against Islamic targets of authority, most notably in Saudi Arabia. But those forces together and the result may well be clashes that could decide whether ours will be a world relatively at peace or plunged into further mindless and bloody wars of terror for years to come.

We know all this now because we have stepped back a few paces, widened our lens a bit. So we can reflect upon the big picture that has been clearly taking shape before our eyes. Even though many didn't see it be-

cause media news-deciders too often considered these pictures unworthy of display.

In Saudi Arabia, al-Qaida has begun bombing government sites in its escalated campaign to topple the monarchy. For years, Saudi rulers bought themselves time by paying what amounted to protection money so that Osama bin Laden would mount his attacks in any sandbox but theirs. Saudis funded mosques and religious schools that taught militant fundamentalist justifications for acts of terror against the West.

In December, an audiotape apparently recorded by bin Laden praised the bombing of a U.S. consulate in Jeddah and blasted the ruling al-Saud family as "agents of infidels." The Saudis have quietly mounted a major effort to destroy al-Qaida cells and backers operating in their country. The Saudis claim overwhelming success — which may incite al-Qaida to attempt to disprove that with one or more new terror attacks there.

The country of bin Laden's birth is populated by those loyal to the ruling family, some moderates educated in the West, and militant fundamentalist Muslims. Conventional wisdom says Saudi rulers are too powerful to be toppled. Just as they said in the late 1970s that the Shah could never be toppled in Iran.

As for the Palestinians: Mahmoud Abbas, overwhelming front-runner in their upcoming presidential election, last week declared that the continuing rocket assaults against Israel are "useless" and called on Palestinian militants to stop them.

Abbas, a battler on a tightrope, has also declared that he will consider it his job to protect those who launched attacks against Israel in the name of Palestinian freedom and will not turn them over to Israeli authorities. He is the best hope for peace; but it remains



to be seen whether calm heads will suddenly prevail with the Saudis and the other groups that have launched terrorist strikes in Israel.

Importantly, in a stunning shift, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt recently declared that Israel's longtime hardliner Ariel Sharon, who is moving to hand over the Gaza Strip to the Palestinians, now appears to be the Palestinians' best chance for forging a lasting peace.

While many U.S. officials have criticized the coverage of the two largest Arab news networks, Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya, they are not the same. Abdul Rahman Al-Rashed, a Saudi who this year became the head of Al-Arabiya, is a staunch critic of Islamic fundamentalist militants. After more than 300

died when Islamic rebels from Chechnya seized a school, he wrote a newspaper column declaring, "It is a certain fact that not all Muslims are terrorists, but it is equally certain, and exceptionally painful, that almost all terrorists are Muslims. ... We cannot tolerate in our midst those who abduct journalists, murder civilians, explode buses, we cannot accept them as related to us, whatever the sufferings they claim to justify their criminal deeds."

"These are the people who have smeared Islam and stained its image."

The emergence of Islamic moderates in positions of power is perhaps the most hopeful sign of all in this time of conflict.

Martin Schram writes political analysis for Scripps Howard News Service.

## Blue vs. red: Different muses, different mind-sets

Let me guess: You're tired of red and blue states. Fair enough. So am I. Let me offer an alternative as we march into 2005. Think of America as divided into an Old Testament nation and a New Testament nation.

William McKenzie

The Old Testament America largely resides along the two coasts and in the Upper Midwest. And when it comes to religion and politics, this nation mostly emphasizes social morality. Gaps between rich and poor. Lack of health care. Pollution pouring down.

All this fits in with Amos, Micah and those Old Testament prophets. They talked about societies being fair and just. And you can hear their values preached in the Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian churches of Pennsylvania, Michigan and Minnesota. You also hear them in Catholic churches in places like Alabama. Think Garrison, Keller, liberal church values and Democratic strongholds.

Over in New Testament America, which runs mostly across the South, West and Rocky Mountains, you get a different emphasis. Personal morality dominates there: Marital fidelity. No abortions. And certainly no gay weddings.

These are people who'll cite you Paul and Romans when discussing homosexuality. They'll also look to books like Galatians for instruction in daily living, like keeping your thoughts pure. That's what you'll hear in small Bible churches, evangelical mega-churches and Pentecostal temples in Flori-

da, Texas and Colorado. Think James Dobson's Focus on the Family and GOP voters.

Here's the question: Neither morality is sufficient unto itself. Old Testament nation can talk about social justice, environmental stewardship and racial equality. But the New Testament nation has a point. What good is all that if you're cheating on your wife or abusing your kids? Personal morality matters — a lot.

Likewise, New Testament nation can complain about homosexuality, abortions and adultery. But what good is that if you ignore gays suffering from AIDS? Or single moms unable to earn a good living? Without social compassion, faith becomes hard and cold.

Or, as Paul would say, a clanging cymbal. What we need is both halves — personal and social morality. That's a tall order, I

admit. But we've had leaders who have combined the two. Jimmy Carter practiced personal piety, even once shocking people as he confessed his lusts. And he understood the social dimensions of his faith, pressing for human rights and decent living standards around the world.

Religious leaders such as the Rev. Eugene Rivers get it today. Like a prophet, the Boston Baptist presses local and national leaders to address social issues such as teen violence, drug abuse and AIDS.

The Old Testament land minister also understands the personal morality New Testament America values. As a pastor in inner-city Boston, he's worked with the Bush White House on finding more personal remedies to, say, drug addiction. He understands that a mentor can do wonders when it

comes to battling a nasty habit.

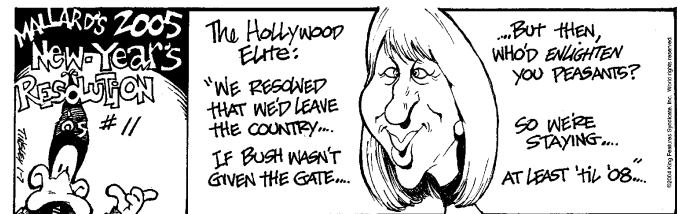
The Rev. Marcus Jackson at the New Mount Moriah Baptist Church in Dallas sticks out, too. He can quote the Bible as much as any fellow New Testament resident. And he practices the spiritual discipline a strong faith requires. But he acknowledges personal holiness only takes you so far. Social justice also is biblical, he emphasized in several conversations we had last year about the presidential election.

That's what I'm looking for: leaders who can combine justice with piety. ... At some point, we need to bring the Old and New Testament nations together. One without the other leaves us incomplete. Personal morality and social morality need to go together, not compete at the ballot box.

William McKenzie is an editorial columnist for The Dallas Morning News.

## Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



## Mandela's son dies at 54

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — Former President Nelson Mandela announced Thursday that his eldest son died Thursday of AIDS-related complications, saying the only way to fight the disease's stigma was to speak openly about it.

Makgatho Mandela, an attorney, was admitted to Linkwood Park Clinic last month. He died at age 54.

"Let us give publicity to HIV/AIDS and not hide it, because the only way of making it appear to be a normal illness, just like TB, like cancer, is always to come out and say somebody has died because of HIV," Mandela said at a news conference at his residence.

Mandela said he had been unaware of his son's illness when he began lobbying for more openness about the pandemic some three years ago.

More than 5 million of South Africa's 45 million people are infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, more than in any other country. An estimated 600 die of AIDS-related complications every day.

Last year, Makgatho Mandela's wife, Zondi, died of pneumonia. The couple had three sons. A fourth son, Mandla Mandela, is the only child from an earlier marriage.

## Black ice closes runways

INNSBRUCK, Austria — Authorities shut down the airport in the western Austrian city of Innsbruck on Thursday after black ice slicked runways, making takeoffs and landings dangerous. No accidents were reported.

Air travelers were being shuttled by bus from Innsbruck to Salzburg for alternative flights, officials said.

Authorities planned to reopen the Innsbruck airport, heavily used by ski tourists, later in the day.

Icy highways for blamed for numerous traffic accidents across much of Austria, where police also closed a stretch of the key A12 highway, local media reported. The Alpine province of Tyrol was particularly hampered by black ice after temperatures warmed to just above freezing overnight.

## Lottory winner still unknown

COPENHAGEN, Denmark — The winner of Denmark's largest ever lottery jackpot hasn't yet come forward to claim the prize, the state-owned lottery organizer said Thursday.

The gambler won \$5.8 million on the weekly Wednesday lottery.

The six-number winning ticket was bought at a Copenhagen newsstand on Wednesday, Dansk Tipløstjeneste Group said.

Lotto sales in Denmark total about \$533 million, accounting for more than 60 percent of Denmark's gaming market.

## Canadian prescription drugs

TORONTO — Internet sales of prescription drugs to U.S. consumers could be banned by Canada if a proposal being drafted by health officials is approved, changes that would essentially kill a \$700 million industry that has become increasingly popular with underinsured patients in search of cheaper medicine.

The issue has become touchy politically for President Bush, whose administration has argued that reimporting U.S.-made drugs from Canada would put consumers at risk because U.S. regulators could not guarantee their safety. The pharmaceutical industry, which donated heavily to Bush's re-election campaign, vehemently opposes reimporting drugs, a practice that undercuts their U.S. sales.

From The Associated Press

# Abbas: Sharon partner in peace

## Presidential candidate hopes talks will resume over Sunday vote

BY MOHAMMED DARAGHMEH

The Associated Press

NABLUS, West Bank — Palestinian presidential candidate Mahmoud Abbas on Thursday described Israeli leader Ariel Sharon as a partner for peace talks and said he hopes negotiations will resume soon after weekend elections.

On a campaign stop in the West Bank's largest city, Abbas reached out to Israel, after a series of hard-line speeches and appearances with Palestinian gunmen in recent days. Israeli officials welcomed the conciliatory statements.

Also Thursday, Israel's army chief announced that he'll expel officers and soldiers who refuse to participate in a planned withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and parts of the West Bank. The warning

came after 34 reserve officers signed a letter urging soldiers not to participate in the pullout.

Abbas, the front-runner in Sunday's election, had come under criticism in Israel this week for a string of incendiary speeches.

But in Nablus, he took a softer approach, criticizing attacks on Israel as counterproductive and calling for a resumption of peace talks with Sharon based on the "road map" plan.

"After the elections, we will start negotiations," Abbas said at a news conference.

"Ariel Sharon is an elected leader and we will negotiate with him. We will put the road map on the table and say that we are ready to implement it completely."

The internationally backed road map, which envisions an independent Palestin-

ian state alongside Israel, has been stalled for more than a year.

Israel refused to negotiate with the previous Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, accusing him of involvement in terrorism.

Arafat died in a French hospital on Nov. 11.

Abbas is eager to resume peace talks. But on the campaign trail, he has had to overcome his image as a dull bureaucrat and build support among the many Palestinian constituencies, including the young members of the powerful militant groups.

Meanwhile, in fresh Gaza violence, Israeli soldiers shot and killed a Hamas militant who had infiltrated the greenhouses of the Jewish settlement of Ganei Tal. The militant, who was armed with hand grenades, an assault rifle and an explosives belt, opened fire on soldiers who were carrying out a routine patrol along the perimeter of the settlement, the army said.

# Orthodox Christians prepare for Christmas

BY MIKE ECKEL

The Associated Press

MOSCOW — The head of Russia's Orthodox Church offered blessings and prayers on the eve of the Christmas Thursday, noting in his traditional holiday greetings that 2004 was a difficult year for Russia.

Patriarch Alexy II also addressed Christians worldwide and people of other faiths, saying "Let us work together for the sake of peace and the prosperity of our peoples."

The patriarch made reference in his greetings to the string of terrorist attacks that struck Russia in August and September, including the Sept. 1-3 hostage-taking at the school in Beslan in which more than 340 people died, nearly half of them children.

"Flouting everything that is holy in their impious madness, terrorists raised their hands against children. The deaths of innocent victims has become our common grief and filled our hearts with pain and sorrow," he said.

"But at the same time, the horrible tragedy has shown that moral ideals are alive in the people: facing death, many people manifested high examples of sacrificial love for their neighbors, laying down their lives for their friends, as the Holy Scripture

says," the patriarch said.

Christmas falls on Jan. 7 for Orthodox Christians in the Holy Land, Russia and other Eastern Orthodox churches that use the old Julian calendar instead of the 16th-century Gregorian calendar adopted by Catholics and Protestants and commonly used in secular life around the world.

Other Orthodox Christians celebrated the holiday on Dec. 25, including Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew — the spiritual leader of the world's Orthodox — and the church in Greece and the Americas.

The patriarch met Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Kremlin also Thursday, where he received well-wishes from the Russian leader. Putin spoke at length about the humanitarian aid and rescue efforts Russia has provided to Asian countries devastated by the Dec. 26 tsunami.

"I want to again wish you a Merry Christmas, happiness and health to you and all the Orthodox Christians, to all the people who will be observing this holy holiday," Putin told the patriarch.

Putin was scheduled to travel to Tver, about 100 miles northwest of Moscow, later Thursday for holiday services.

The Russian Orthodox Church, which



The head of Russia's Orthodox Church, Patriarch Alexy II and President Vladimir Putin meet Thursday on the eve of the Orthodox Christmas at the Kremlin in Moscow. The patriarch received the good wishes from the Russian leader.

was all but banned during the Soviet Union, has experienced a major resurgence since the 1991, with an estimated two-thirds of Russia's 144 million people believed to be observant.

## Three Kings Day in Spain



Ensign Ernest Padilla, a U.S. naval officer assigned to Naval Station Rota, Spain, throws candies to children on Wednesday during the Three Kings parade in Rota, Spain. Three Kings Day, which celebrates the visit of the three wise men to baby Jesus — is a national holiday in Spain. Every year in Rota, an American is selected to play the part of one of the three kings.

SCOTT SCHONAUER  
Stars and Stripes

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## Agencies bid for reef

**CA** VENTURA — Federal and local agencies want to build an artificial reef between Mussel Shoals and Sealcliff to combat beach erosion.

The Beach Erosion Authority for Clean Oceans and Nourishment, known as BEACON, and the Army Corps of Engineers applied to the California Coastal Commission to build the \$2 million reef at the old Mobil Oil Piers site.

The commission could schedule a public hearing soon. If the project is approved, construction is possible as early as this summer.

## 'Dixie' causes stir

**WI** MADISON — A high school band's performance of an Elvis Presley hit during the Senate's inaugural ceremony has drawn a complaint from a newly elected member because it included a version of "Dixie."

The Richland Center High School band played a version of "An American Trilogy" at the Capitol — a song that mixes "Dixie" with "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and the spiritual "All My Trials."

To many blacks, "Dixie" is a symbol of racism and slavery. Sen. Spencer Cogges, who is black, said he was shocked to hear the strains of the Southern anthem and complained in a letter to Senate Majority Leader Dale Schultz.

"Whether the slight was intentional or not, the selection was not appropriate," he wrote. "It is unfortunate that this special day was marred by such an unnecessary event."

Schultz said he wasn't aware of every musical selection the band prepared for the event and said he would apologize. "If Sen. Cogges felt offended, I would want to extend my hand in apology," he said.

## Free ride to jail

**LA** SLIDELL — A tourist who called 911 to demand a ride to the bus station instead got a lift to jail.

The St. Tammany Parish sheriff's office said James Brown of St. Louis called from a pay phone and threatened to kill someone if he didn't get a ride to the bus station. When deputies arrived, officials said they found the man intoxicated and belligerent. He was booked on charges of misuse of 911.

## Adirondack protection

**NY** ALBANY — The state agreed to protect 104,000 acres of northern Adirondack timberlands from development and provide public recreational access, Gov. George Pataki said. The parcels in Clinton and Franklin counties represent the holdings of Domtar Industries in the 6-million-acre Adirondack Park.

The deal is expected to add 20,000 acres directly to state forests and limited access to another 84,000 acres for hiking, snowmobiling and some ATV use.

## Hispanic baby boom

**AZ** PHOENIX — More than 39,000 babies were born to



## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Hispanic women in Arizona in 2003, compared with about 38,800 babies born to Anglo women that year, according to state statistics.

The numbers reflect the state's rapidly growing Hispanic population.

"Every demographer I've talked to thinks the majority of Arizona's population will be Hispanic by 2035 or 2045," said Loui Olivas, a professor at Arizona State University.

## Controlling wild wolves

**ID** BOISE — Idaho and Montana will get more authority to manage gray wolves under a new rule adopted by the federal government, wildlife officials announced.

The rule, which takes effect Feb. 2, gives the states and private landowners more control in curbing wolf attacks on livestock, domestic animals and wild game herds.

Ed Bangs, wolf recovery team leader for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, said the new rule would especially help private landowners by allowing wolves to be killed without prior written approval if ranchers can prove the animals are harassing livestock.

## Fake nurse investigated

**TX** DALLAS — A man who worked without a nursing license at a retirement home is under investigation by state regula-



## Arizona snow angel

Alister Marshall, 4, makes a snow angel in Thorpe Park in Flagstaff, Ariz. Marshall came to Flagstaff with his family from Phoenix to play in the snow.

tors after his 10-year health care career began unraveling through a tip.

Administrators at Brentwood Place nursing home told The Dallas Morning News that they were cooperating with representatives from the Medicaid fraud control unit of the Texas attorney general's office in the investigation of David Wayne Rhodes.

## Skier dies on slopes

**VT** KILLINGTON — A 27-year-old Massachusetts man died after falling on one of Killington Resort's most difficult trails and then sliding out of control into trees.

Vermont State Police said Andrew Begley of Cambridge, Mass., apparently lost control while skiing on the Double Dipper trail.

Lt. David Covell said that Begley slid "a significant distance," going off the Double Dipper trail through a roped-off area where Killington snow gins were stored and into the Big Dipper trail before a tree stopped him.

"It looks possible that he may have collided with some equipment in that initial closed area he entered," Covell said.

## Justice sues colleagues

**OK** OKLAHOMA CITY — A member of Oklahoma's highest court got passed over for chief justice, and now he's suing his eight colleagues because he thinks they skipped him because of his age.

Justice Marian P. Opala, 83, filed the lawsuit in federal district court, charging he was discriminated against when his fellow justices changed a rule to allow the chief justice to serve consecutive terms. The post had been rotated every two years.

The rule change in November allowed Chief Justice Joseph M. Watt to succeed himself. Opala would have been in line to lead the court.

In his lawsuit, Opala described himself as in good health and of sound mind. He said his age was "a significant factor" in being passed over for chief justice, a post that carries with it "ceremonial duties" and a bigger paycheck. A justice earns an annual salary of \$107,000, the chief justice \$110,000.

## West Nile cases down

**NM** SANTA FE — New Mexico had 88 confirmed cases of West Nile virus in 2004, including four deaths, according to the state Department of Health.

The total was far less than the 209 cases confirmed in 2003 when four elderly people died of the infection.

## Bobcat job boost

**ND** BISMARCK — Gov. John Hoeven's State of the State speech to open the legislative session came with an announcement that the Bobcat company plans to add 100 jobs in Bismarck.

The North Dakota company makes skid-steer loaders and other heavy equipment. Bobcat employs more than 2,600 people in the state and has an annual payroll of more than \$1 billion, Hoeven said.



## Mother Nature at work

A water spout appears just off the coast of Palos Verdes, Calif., during a break in a winter storm.



## Through the fog

A train travels in the fog across a bridge spanning the Arkansas River in Fort Smith, Ark. The warmer air temperatures hovering over the cooler water created the foggy mist.



## Wading in the water

Audrey Morrison, left, and her sister, Britney, play in the water just off shore at Lake Nicol in Tuscaloosa, Ala. The outing started as a fishing trip but turned into wading in the lake when the fishing line became snagged. The two were accompanied by their father, Jerrold Morrison, and grandmother Katherine Morrison.





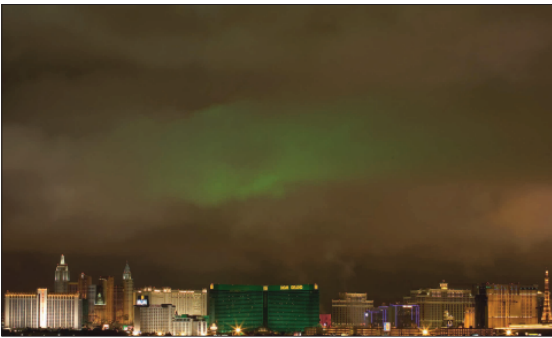
## Braving the winter

A woman braces against the cold and blowing snow as she walks down 17th Street in downtown Denver.



## Letting off steam

Steam rises from Mount St. Helens in Washington state.



## Vegas afterglow

Lights from hotel-casinos on the Strip reflect on low-passing clouds during a storm in Las Vegas.

## Historic hat purchased

**AK** ANCHORAGE — A rare spruce root hat adorned with beads and sea lion whiskers will stay in the state after its purchase by two Alaska museums.

The Alutiq Museum of Kodiak and the Anchorage Museum of History and Art combined to buy the Alutiq spruce root hunting hat from a Juneau family, which had offered the artifact Dec. 6 at a Bonhams and Butterfields Auction in San Francisco. The price was \$160,250.

"This is the first one that is going to be here in Alaska," said Sven Hankanson Jr., executive director of the Alutiq Museum.

The Alutiq people traditionally lived between Southcentral Alaska and the Alaska Peninsula. Most were on Kodiak Island, America's second-largest island after Hawaii.

## Asbestos closes school

**HI** HONOLULU — Students at King Intermediate School along Windward Oahu are going to get an even longer break from classes than previously expected, public school officials said.

The school was closed Dec. 15, three days before winter recess was set to begin, so campus buildings could be cleaned of asbestos.

The school was to reopen after winter vacation and intersession. But state Schools Superintendent Patricia Hamamoto said imminent weather delays testing results and any subsequent cleaning that could be necessary.

Classes at King Intermediate are now set to resume Jan. 13th, she said.

## Don't forget the horses

**KY** LOUISVILLE — A group of Kentucky horse breeders and farm owners has launched a billboard campaign showing how tenuous the state's claim as the horse capital could become.

Billboards along a stretch of Interstate 64 in Louisville proclaim, "Welcome to New York, Horse Capital of the World."

The Kentucky Equine Education Project is paying for eight to 10 billboards in Louisville and Lexington and several more in Frankfort over the next few months.

Clara Horn Shadwick, KEE's executive director, said the billboards are part of the group's goal of educating the state about the economic importance of horses in Kentucky.

"It's an extension of KEE's educational phase, which is to make the point pretty forcefully and bluntly that our state can't take the industry for granted," she said.

## Bartender held hostage

**NY** GOWANDA — A western New York man said to be grieving the death of a family member took a bartender hostage and opened fire on police during a four-hour standoff that ended only after he passed out drunk, authorities said.

Dale Covert was facing a charge of attempted murder after firing a single round at a Gowanda police officer, State Police Maj. Michael Manning said.

Police responded to the Palm Gardens restaurant lounge 30 miles south of Buffalo around 3

p.m. after receiving a report of a man brandishing a gun inside the establishment, where Covert was holding a female bartender.

Shortly after 6:30 p.m., the bartender emerged from the bar, unharmed. Covert, who was drinking heavily, then passed out, Manning said.

## Politicians admit bribe

**TX** BROWNSVILLE — Two former Willacy County commissioners pleaded guilty to accepting bribes for their votes on federal prison contracts.

Jose Jimenez, 67, of Sebastian, and Israel Tamez, 58, of Raymondville, waived indictment and admitted accepting more than \$10,000 each from companies competing for work on the Willacy County Adult Correctional Center. The \$14.5 million prison was being built to house federal inmates.

Federal prosecutors say the men accepted the bribes between June 2000 and March 2003.

Both men are free on \$50,000 personal recognizance bonds. They have agreed to cooperate with an ongoing investigation by the FBI, Texas Rangers, and Willacy County Sheriff's Department.

Each faces up to 20 years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine at their April 11 sentencing.

## Help for drug addicts

**KY** PIKEVILLE — Gov. Ernie Fletcher unveiled a \$9.5 million initiative to help pay for the construction and operation of 10 recovery centers for drug addicts.

The effort would focus on homeless people, Fletcher said he expects two of the centers to be in eastern Kentucky, where police are combating what has been called an epidemic of prescription drug abuse.

## N.J. losing millionaires

**NJ** NEWARK — The number of millionaires in New Jersey declined, an annual report showed.

The report said 8,300 Garden State residents reported taxable income of \$1 million or more in 2002, the fewest since 1998 and far short of the peak of 12,365 posted in 2000.

The report also showed that total income in New Jersey declined for the second straight year.

## Musket shoot will go on

**NC** CHARLOTTE — A teenager was killed during a rural town's New Year's tradition of firing vintage black-powder muskets into the air, but town officials declared that the centuries-old ritual would continue to be celebrated.

During the revelry, a rifle exploded and pieces of the barrel struck 18-year-old Matthew K. Shook in the side of the head.

"There's no effort in place here to end the practice," Mayor Bob Austell said in a telephone interview. "This is something that's been going on in Cherryville for more than 200 years. We have grandsons firing off muskets that once belonged to their grandfathers."

Austell conceded, however, it was time to review safety standards for the "New Year's Shoot" in Cherryville, a town of 5,400 about 40 miles west of Charlotte.

Stories and photos from wire service

## FACES

## Ashlee Simpson booted at Orange Bowl

Ashlee Simpson's Orange Bowl halftime performance was a lemon, according to the 72,000-plus Miami crowd. The 20-year-old singer received a dismiling chorus of boos following a performance of her song "La La." "You make me wanna scream," she sang before the audience jeered.

Simpson was among a trio of half-time performers Tuesday night in a game that saw Southern California overwhelm Oklahoma 55-19. The camera cut away from her face as the booing began.

The negative vocal reaction came months after Simpson's performance on NBC's "Saturday Night Live," which revealed she used background vocal tracks. The mishap was later attributed to acid reflux disease.

However, the Orange Bowl crowd did have a reason to cheer: The Walt Disney Co. gave a theme park ticket to every fan, a promotion that could cost as much as \$4.3 million if all the tickets are used, is in honor of the 50th anniversary of its Disneyland park in California.

## Dick Clark coming along after stroke

A month after his stroke, Dick Clark remains hospitalized in good spirits while working with rehabilitation specialists.



Clark

The "American Bandstand" icon watched Regis Philbin host "Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve 2005" from his hospital bed and said "he enjoyed the show and thought Regis did a wonderfully professional job," Clark publicist Paul Sherin said Wednesday.

As promised, Clark kissed his wife, **Kari**, at midnight, the spokesman added.

Clark, 75, was hospitalized at an undisclosed Burbank, Calif., hospital on Dec. 6 after suffering a mild stroke. Sherin wouldn't disclose specifics.

There was no word on when Clark would go home. During the ABC-TV New Year's Eve show, fans held up "Get Well Dick" signs. Celebrities, including **Madonna**, **John Travolta**, **Janet Jackson** and others, were shown on videotape expressing best wishes.

## Bush up, Beckham down in Britain

The most powerful man in Britain is American President **Bush**, while soccer star **David Beckham's** sway over British society is in free fall, a men's magazine said Wednesday.

Bush tied with Prime Minister **Tony Blair** for first place in the list drawn up by the British edition of **Q** magazine.

Blair has long faced criticism that he simply follows Bush's orders as his "poodle," but **Q** claimed that re-election has given Bush an even bigger say in British life. Last year, the U.S. president didn't make the top 100. Beckham plummeted from eighth to 23rd place, reflecting a turbulent year for the England soccer captain in which "the wheels seem to have come off Brand Beckham," **Q** said.

His marriage to **Victoria Beckham**, a former Spice Girl, hit the headlines in April when a former personal aide, **Rebecca Loos**, claimed she and the soccer star had had a 10-day affair. He dismissed the claim as "ludicrous" and "absurd."

## Price still right for Bob Barker

**Bob Barker** has agreed to continue as host of "The Price Is Right" for a record 34th season, **CBS** announced.

"I was considering retiring this year and going into bodybuilding with the thought in mind of becoming governor of California," the 81-year-old Emmy-winning game-show host joked.

"But I decided to instead stay with the body I have and the job I have."

**Barbara Bloom**, senior vice president, daytime programs, said Barker and "The Price Is Right" are cornerstones of **CBS** daytime.

"We're thrilled that Bob has agreed to continue for another year, no doubt delighting his legions of fans across the country," Bloom said in a statement Monday.



Barker

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

# A calculated risk-taker



## Michael Weatherly gave up the safety net of college to pursue career as an actor

BY LUIAINE LEE

Knight Ridder/Tribune News Service

**HOLLYWOOD** — When actor Michael Weatherly was 12 years old, his parents sent him away to camp called "Camp Challenge." His mother wanted to toughen him up, he says.

"It was a three-week duration and I had to canoe, fight, build my own ax, learn to read a topographic map, compass and we had something called '24-hour survival' where they left us in the woods alone for 24 hours and you had to find food, build a lean-to. That changed me. It either changed me or it broke me," he says.

"But when I showed up [at camp] I was wearing a white turtleneck and white bell-bottoms. And I was from Connecticut and playing tennis at the country club. When I came back I was wearing hiking boots and blue jeans and I'd spent some time with some interesting people," he says.

It turns out it was a profitable move in more ways than one. Now as the wisecracking **Tony DiNozzo** on **CBS'** "NCIS," Weatherly, 36, has to combine those skills along with his impish sense of humor and considerable acting talent.

"He's a federal agent but he has very little regard for towing the line of political correctness or anything like that," he says.

"I love playing somebody who was kind of a rebel without a cause," says Weatherly.

Weatherly's son, 8-year-old **August**, is with him today at this Sunday morning breakfast. The two plan a secret outing after Weatherly is done, and it's clear August enjoys his father's company, even if he does mean sitting still in a restaurant booth for an hour.

Weatherly, who played **Logan** on "Dark Angel," and the evil ex-husband on "Jesse," broke family tradition when he became an actor. And while he underplays it, the subversive move was probably more costly than he admits.

"I grew up in Connecticut, went to an all-boys school and then went away to boarding school ...," he says.

"So I grew up in a very narrow world ... I felt that I didn't know enough about the world at large, and I'm a people-watcher. I love to do that. I wanted to learn about other people. And so it's my endless fasci-

nation with what makes people tick."

Weatherly's parents divorced when he was 15. And he has a pack of half and stepiblings because each parent married three times. He also has one blood brother, **William**.

His father, who is the exclusive importer and distributor of the Swiss Army knife, wasn't pleased when Weatherly told him he wanted to quit college in his senior year.

"He lives in Jamaica half a year, and I called him in Jamaica and said, 'I'm going to move to New York, and I want to be an actor.' He said, 'You should think very carefully about what you are doing because you're closing doors by not finishing your education, and you're not allowing yourself the opportunity to become what you should one day become — which is probably a mature adult.'"

So when Weatherly blew out political science for primetime he was on his own.

"In the social hierarchy I took myself down a notch," he says with a nod. Glancing at August, he says, "This is probably not a great thing for future generations, but I didn't want to have a safety net. I thought if I have a safety net, I'll get a job in advertising or something and I won't feel as motivated. I really needed all that motivation. ... But I don't think it was ever my father's intention to put me on any kind of a trust fund. We don't have trust fund babies in our family. Once you're 18, you can go to college. And college is paid for, a gift of huge magnitude, but I looked a gift horse in the mouth and became an actor."

There were some struggling years, but Weatherly managed to cop a Snickers commercial and eventually wound up on daytime's "Loving," where he worked with his ex-wife, actress **Ameilia Heinle**.

He wouldn't mind marrying again, he says, and is dating a woman who works in the pharmaceutical industry and doesn't live in California.

He's also dated **Rachel Hunter** and **Jessica Alba**.

"I heard a great thing ... about men and women. There are gardeners and there are flowers. You can have a gardener and a flower."

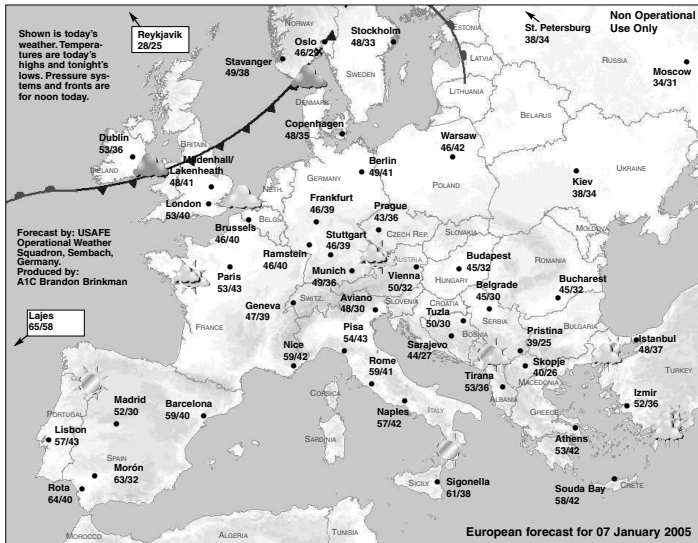
You can have a gardener and a gardener — might be a little boring but they're working hard. But if you have two flowers, nobody's taking care of the garden. Actors have a tendency to be flowers. So nobody's minding the garden."

Looking lovingly at August, he adds, "When I'm hanging out with you I'm sort of a gardener and you're the flower. You bring out the gardener in me."



CBS photo





# EUROPEAN FORECAST

**Benelex:** Cloudy. Highs in the mid 40s, Saturday lows in the low 40s.

**Britain:** Cloudy with isolated rain showers and strong winds. Highs in the upper 40s to low 50s. Saturday lows in the mid 30s to low 40s.

**Croatia and Bosnia:** Partly cloudy with morning fog. Highs in the low 40s to low 50s. Saturday lows in the upper 20s to low 30s.

**France:** Partly to mostly cloudy. Highs in the low to upper 50s. Saturday lows in the low 40s.

**Northern Germany:** Mostly cloudy. Highs in the upper 30s to low 40s.

**Southern Germany:** Mostly cloudy. Highs in the mid to upper 40s. Saturday lows in the mid 30s to low 40s.

**Hungary:** Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid 40s, Saturday lows in the low 30s.

**Northern Italy:** Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 40s to mid 50s. Saturday lows in the low 30s to low 40s.

**Southern Italy:** Sunny. Highs in the mid to upper 40s, Saturday lows in the upper 30s to low 40s.

**Kosovo:** Partly to mostly cloudy with morning fog. Highs in the low to mid 40s. Saturday lows in the mid to upper 20s.

**Norway:** Cloudy with rain. Highs in the mid to upper 40s, Saturday lows in the upper 30s to low 40s.

**Portugal, Spain:** Sunny. Highs in the low 50s in the central region to mid 60s in the near coast. Saturday lows in the low 30s to low 40s.

**Turkey:** Mostly cloudy with isolated rain showers. Highs in the upper 40s to low 50s. Saturday lows in the mid 30s.



## AFRICA

Capetown	71	HI	80	MO	80	HI	80
Dakar	77	HI	86	MO	86	HI	86
Freetown	80	HI	89	MO	89	HI	89
Algeria	71	HI	80	MO	80	HI	80

## MIDEAST

Inirlik	53/46	HI	60	MO	60	HI	60
Tel Aviv	62/43	HI	70	MO	70	HI	70
Cairo	67/47	HI	75	MO	75	HI	75
Mazar-e-Sharif	55/22	HI	60	MO	60	HI	60
Kabul	43/20	HI	50	MO	50	HI	50
Islamabad	62/40	HI	70	MO	70	HI	70
New Delhi	68/47	HI	75	MO	75	HI	75
Kandahar	64/37	HI	70	MO	70	HI	70
Zahedan	64/29	HI	70	MO	70	HI	70
Dubai	81/57	HI	90	MO	90	HI	90
Bombay	89/68	HI	95	MO	95	HI	95

## THE WORLD

Amsterdam	52	HI	60	MO	60	HI	60
Bahran	68	HI	75	MO	75	HI	75
Beijing	36	HI	45	MO	45	HI	45
Bombay	89	HI	95	MO	95	HI	95
Buenos Aires	42	HI	50	MO	50	HI	50
Buenos Aires	42	HI	50	MO	50	HI	50
Buenos Aires	42	HI	50	MO	50	HI	50
Buenos Aires	42	HI	50	MO	50	HI	50
Buenos Aires	42	HI	50	MO	50	HI	50
Buenos Aires	42	HI	50	MO	50	HI	50

## THE WORLD

Amsterdam	52	HI	60	MO	60	HI	60
Bahran	68	HI	75	MO	75	HI	75
Beijing	36	HI	45	MO	45	HI	45
Bombay	89	HI	95	MO	95	HI	95
Buenos Aires	42	HI	50	MO	50	HI	50
Buenos Aires	42	HI	50	MO	50	HI	50
Buenos Aires	42	HI	50	MO	50	HI	50
Buenos Aires	42	HI	50	MO	50	HI	50
Buenos Aires	42	HI	50	MO	50	HI	50
Buenos Aires	42	HI	50	MO	50	HI	50

For current weather watches, warnings, and today's forecasts go to the USAF Operational Weather Squadron home page at: <http://www.sembach.af.mil>

<http://www.public.sembach.af.mil>

## SUN & MOON

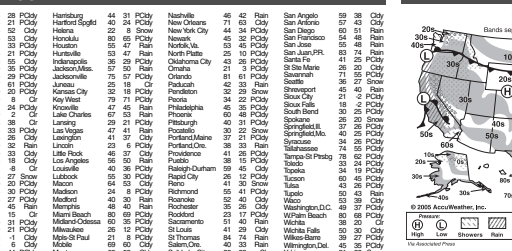
Sunrise (Baghdad)	7:08am	Today	7:08am	Tomorrow
Sunrise (Frankfurt)	8:23am	Today	8:23am	Tomorrow
Sunset (Baghdad)	5:12pm	Today	5:12pm	Tomorrow
Sunset (Frankfurt)	4:41pm	Today	4:41pm	Tomorrow



## TODAY'S STATESIDE OUTLOOK

Atlanta	52	HI	60	MO	60	HI	60
Boston	42	HI	50	MO	50	HI	50
Chicago	32	HI	40	MO	40	HI	40
Dallas	52	HI	60	MO	60	HI	60
Denver	32	HI	40	MO	40	HI	40
Detroit	32	HI	40	MO	40	HI	40
Houston	52	HI	60	MO	60	HI	60
Los Angeles	52	HI	60	MO	60	HI	60
Memphis	52	HI	60	MO	60	HI	60
Minneapolis	32	HI	40	MO	40	HI	40
Miami	72	HI	80	MO	80	HI	80
Phoenix	52	HI	60	MO	60	HI	60
Portland	52	HI	60	MO	60	HI	60
San Francisco	52	HI	60	MO	60	HI	60
Seattle	52	HI	60	MO	60	HI	60
St. Louis	52	HI	60	MO	60	HI	60
Tampa	72	HI	80	MO	80	HI	80
Washington	52	HI	60	MO	60	HI	60
Wichita	52	HI	60	MO	60	HI	60
Yonkers	32	HI	40	MO	40	HI	40

## THE UNITED STATES TODAY



Scheduled to

ETS or PCS?

Check our Relocation Guide every Saturday to find Realtors at your new station.

STARS AND STRIPES.

Your Hometown Newspaper.



# Horoscope

The sun and Jupiter have terse words, bringing focus to just what it is we think we deserve. Entitlement is tricky business. Sure, the Zen approach of expecting nothing works for the highly evolved. But for those of us who aren't quite there yet — and don't plan on getting there anytime soon — send our sights too low will feel like a mistake.

## TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

**(January 7).** Your excellent self-care attracts the best of you this year. This month features life-changing educational opportunities! Loved ones learn from you, and their success contributes to your success. Clear out any communication trouble, and get your living arrangement in order this month. Change your financial plan in March for a windfall in June.

**ARIES (March 21-April 19).** Believe in your talent. Beware of the trap of becoming an armchair philosopher or poet when you could rise to the level of a practicing artist. All of the rewards go to those who are willing to dig in and do the work.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20).** It's a big challenge to break out of your fixed mind-set now. It seems that things are as they have been eternally and as they will remain forever. Being around a mentally benighted Aquarius or Libra is the remedy.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** It's go-go-go time. The pace is fast, but not only are mistakes ignored, they are also of little consequence. The quantity of production outweighs its quality in the end. This evening brings riotous fun.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** Young people learn quickly because they have no preconceived notions. It's impossible to learn what you think you know already. A relationship can blossom when you stop anticipating the other person's next move.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** Everybody loves a shortcut, and you'll find one that would benefit know-

ing. Keep it to yourself for a while, though. Your expertise is well earned, and others will respect it more when you don't share so readily.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** Sweet gestures and kind words are exchanged. Friendships develop when you reach out because you want to, not because you've got anything in particular to gain from the interaction.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** You're a dear, you're a doll, you're a pal! And this is why so much of your time is with other people's disposal. No one is going to help you if you're the bad guy if you say, "I wish I could help you, but I can't."

**SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** The stars remind you of the physical limitations we all share. Since you can't create more time in the day, in order to improve your life, you'll have to create more value. Aim for a bigger accomplishment.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** Anywhere people gather to work on health is fabulous for your love life. If you are in a relationship, reinforcing your commitment to health makes you feel sexy. And if single, you'll meet others with like values.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** It seems that your mood depends solely on how a key relationship is going for you. It's time to take the power back that you're so readily giving away. Feast at life's table instead of setting for the crumbs on the floor.

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Ask for more — just for the heck of it! People are surprisingly agreeable to your requests. The experiences you gathered from dating Mr. Me Wrong will help you make the most of tonight's adventure.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).** Your self-concept is going through another one of those incremental changes. Experiment by thinking, talking and dressing differently. Discovering a new aspect of yourself is like happening on a sunken treasure.

Creators Syndicate

## Holiday Mathis



## Calvin and Hobbes



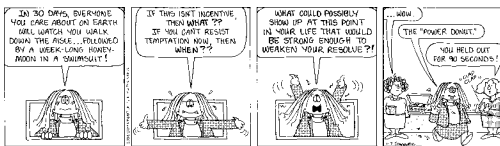
## Jump Start



## Zits



## Cathy



## Hi and Lois



## Beetle Bailey



## Red and Rover



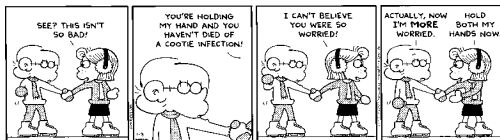
## Better or Worse



## Peanuts



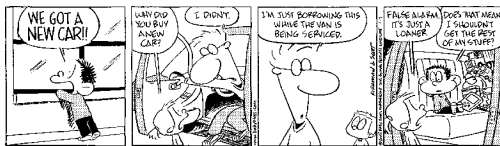
Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



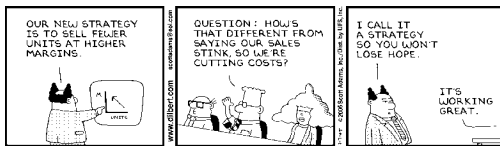
Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



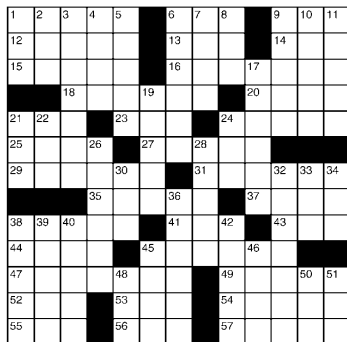
Hagar



Garfield



## Eugene Sheffer Crossword



## Across

- 1 Huey, Dewey and Louie
- 6 Third degree?
- 9 Society newbie
- 12 A religion
- 13 Melody
- 14 Prior night
- 15 "Positive thinking" proponent
- 16 Brass instrument
- 18 Panne, e.g.
- 20 Lotsa time
- 21 Mainlander's memento
- 23 Stannum
- 24 Adipose
- 25 Detail
- 27 Rose
- 29 Progenitor
- 31 Right on time
- 35 Miss America's accessory

## Down

- 1 Potato-chip enhancement
- 2 Deal with
- 3 Keyboard instrument
- 4 Hardy cabbage
- 5 Work in a refinery
- 6 Obvious
- 7 "Java" man
- 8 Actress Joanne
- 9 Station
- 10 "Wheel of Fortune" category
- 11 "Heavens to —!"
- 17 Lea
- 19 Panorama
- 21 Back talk
- 22 Schedule abbr.
- 24 Supporting
- 26 In grams, liters, etc.
- 28 October stones
- 30 Serbian city
- 32 Percussion instrument
- 33 Snoo
- 34 Gadget for Els
- 36 Spa
- 38 Re John Paul II
- 39 Ozu flavor
- 40 Pruritic
- 42 "Is that your — answer?"
- 45 Sheltered
- 46 Unaltered
- 48 Resistance unit
- 50 Wapiti
- 51 — Plaines, Illinois

## Answer to Previous Puzzle



## 1-7

## CRYPTOQUIP

Y Q C M C R J K E Y V  
G B Y X Y M C J G L Q E K X C  
Q Y B X ' V R C V J , Y V F A A K V G

SG'V KFI KQ JSG AYRJFEG.  
Yesterday's Cryptquip: IF YOU GAVE CASH  
SELLING LARGE COFFEPOTS, I GUESS THAT  
MEANS YOU URN YOUR KEEP.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: R equals C



Jones will make himself available for the NFL draft.



# a season of futility, 49ers clear house

## Coach Erickson, GM Donohue dismissed after team's poorest showing since 1979

BY GREG BEACHAM

The Associated Press

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — Owner John York eventually came to the same conclusion reached much earlier by most of the San Francisco 49ers' fans: Terry Donohue was the wrong man to rebuild this once-proud franchise, and Dennis Erickson was the wrong man to coach it.

York fired his coach and dismissed his general manager on Wednesday, cleaning house just three days after the 49ers finished with the NFL's worst record. The owner made a rare public appearance to announce the dramatic changes to his team, which went 2-14 to match the worst season in San Francisco history.

The new coach and general manager will get to use the first overall pick in the upcoming draft, but the 49ers' reputation has declined steadily since York and his wife took over the team in 1999. York believes he can fix things — and boost the 49ers' attempts to raise support for a new stadium — by hiring new people who can quickly transform his club.

It's an expensive solution, however: Erickson will get all of the \$7.5 million still owed to him in the three remaining years of his contract, while Donohue reached a financial settlement just four months after working a four-year extension reportedly worth \$15 million.

"Sometimes, even when everyone works very hard, the formula for winning just isn't there," York said. "We're going to use the extreme disappointment that we all have felt as our turning point."

"We know how much passion 49ers fans have, and we understand that it is unacceptable to our fans. We need our fans to know that it's equally unacceptable to us. We take our responsibility as owners seriously."

Erickson went 9-23 in two seasons as Steve Mariucci's successor, never reaching the postseason. He won two national championships at the University of Miami, but is 40-56 in six seasons as an NFL head coach in San Francisco and Seattle.

Erickson got the news in a meeting with York on Wednesday morning. He has little reason to be bitter: He's leaving one of the NFL's biggest messes, and he got paid roughly \$1.39 million for every victory with the 49ers.

"There really wasn't much more than that, other than I thanked him for the opportunity," Erickson said. "They wanted to go their direction, I've got to go my direction. It's a divorce. It's final now."

The 49ers won five championships from 1981-94, but on York's watch, they've had just two winning seasons and won just one playoff game. Erickson is the second coach fired by York in slightly less than two years, following his abrupt dismissal of



In six NFL seasons, Dennis Erickson compiled 40-56 record, including 9-23 in two seasons with the San Francisco 49ers.

Mariucci just days after a second-round playoff loss at Tampa Bay.

York said he plans to hire a winning head coach with NFL experience before replacing his general manager, though he doesn't expect one man to hold both jobs. He has a list of fewer than 10 candidates, including a few coaches still working for playoff teams. Under a recent rule change, assistant coaches with teams still in the playoffs are allowed to interview for other jobs.

York didn't deny an interest in speaking to former Patriots and Jets coach Pete Carroll, who wrapped up his second straight national championship with Southern California on Tuesday night.

"I think we all watched the game last night. That was a tremendous game," York

said. "They were very dominant, and he's a great coach."

Donohue, the longtime UCLA coach, was the hand-picked successor to Bill Walsh, who led the team's rebuilding from a similar salary cap-induced funk five years ago. Since taking over from Walsh in 2001, Donohue has been criticized for mediocre drafts and unorthodox strategies, from his difficult salary cap relief plan to his reliance on unusual player evaluation methods.

"I am very disappointed that I do not have the opportunity to remain with the 49ers," Donohue said in a statement. "There is absolutely no doubt in my mind with the improvement in the salary cap situation, the return of a lot of injured players along with a good draft, that we would have experienced a great deal of success in the future."

While Erickson took much of the heat for the 49ers' record, many of their shortcomings were due to a stripped-down roster assembled by Donohue, who waived several veterans and pared the payroll last summer in an effort to rid the 49ers of the "dead money" — being paid to players no longer with the team — on their salary cap. San Francisco had nearly \$29 million in dead money this season despite the departures of receiver Terrell Owens, quarterback Jeff Garcia, running back Garrison Hearst and standout offensive linemen Derrick Deseau and Ron Stone, among others.

The 49ers knew they would struggle this season with that young, inexpensive roster, but few expected them to match the 2-14 mark set by the club in 1978 and 1979. "Nobody thought we'd be sitting here at 2-14," York said. "Absolutely nobody."

## Brees chosen Comeback Player of '04

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Drew Brees went from forgotten to one of the NFL's best quarterbacks this season. He was rewarded for his turnaround with The Associated Press 2004 Comeback Player of the Year award.

The San Diego Chargers so doubted Brees after his weak 2003 performance that they drafted Eli Manning with the top pick last April, then traded him to the New York Giants for the rights to another highly rated quarterback prospect, Philip Rivers. Had Rivers not held out for half the preseason, Brees might not have gotten on the field in '04.

The first choice in the second round of the 2001 draft completed 262 of 400 passes for 3,159 yards, 27 touchdowns and only seven interceptions.

Brees got 18½ votes from a national panel of writers and broadcasters who cover pro football, easily beating Carolina linebacker Mark Fields, who received 10 votes. Fields was sidelined last season with Hodgkin's disease.

**Savage reportedly set to be Browns GM**

CLEVELAND — Phil Savage accepted an offer to be general manager of the Cleveland Browns, leaving Baltimore for a struggling AFC North rival, a Browns official told The Associated Press on Wednesday.

Considered one of the NFL's top talent evaluators, the 39-year-old Savage is returning to the Browns, who gave him his start in the NFL in 1991 as a defensive assistant under coordinator Nick Saban.

**Manning runaway winner for top offensive player**

NEW YORK — Peyton Manning was a runaway winner of The Associated Press 2004 NFL Offensive Player of the Year.

Indianapolis Colts' star quarterback broke Dan Marino's 20-year-old record with 49 touchdown passes and had a passer rating of 121.1, shattering Steve Young's mark of 112.8 set in 1994. Manning threw only 10 interceptions and hit on 67.6 percent of his throws for 4,557 yards.

## Nemesis: Marty has a track record of short playoff runs

NEMESIS, FROM BACK PAGE

Byner at the Denver 2 with 1:05 left. Denver won, 38-33.

Schottenheimer remembers that receiver Webster Slaughter was supposed to run a route into one corner of the end zone.

"But he was a young player and he was interested in seeing what happened on the play so he took one step and he stopped," Schottenheimer said. "Well, when the defender saw him stop, he came back and saw the runner come and he took off. He never would have been in the play if they had just run up in the corner of the end zone. Byner never saw him coming."

In 1995, Schottenheimer's Chiefs had the NFL's best record and were shocked 10-7 at home by the wild-card Indianapolis Colts. The Chiefs committed an uncharacteristic four turnovers and Lin Elliott missed three field goals.

The same Colts, by the way, upset the Chargers 35-20 on Dec. 31, 1995, San Diego's most recent playoff game.

Schottenheimer's last playoff game was after the 1997 season, and again Elway ended his season, 14-10 in Kansas City.

Linebacker Donnie Edwards, now in his third year with the Chargers, remembers the Chiefs collapsing against another wild-card team after again going 13-3.

"All of a sudden we lost to the

Broncos and everyone's just sitting there stunned like, 'Season's over, what do we do now?'

Edwards said.

But the Chiefs probably overlooked the Broncos, who went on to win the Super Bowl.

That was also the game in which Schottenheimer went back to quarterback Elvis Grbac even though Rich Gannon played well in relief while Grbac was injured. It was Schottenheimer's fourth straight playoff loss.

Schottenheimer says he never wonders why he's had such bad luck, "because then you have to go and look at the ones that went your way. You know they're single-elimination going in. Hell, we went six quarters against the Jets to win in that year of 'The Drive'."

Edwards said Schottenheimer has eased up on the Chargers in practice, which could be a key Saturday night.

"I know in the past it wasn't like that at all," Edwards said. "We were in pads and we were banging. In that respect, it's totally changed. That's huge right there. He's taken them off us so we can be ready, set to go and fight on Saturday."

And maybe change their coach's luck.



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# Saturday a wild beginning to NFL playoffs

BY RICK GOLLEIN

The Dallas Morning News

**T**he NFL playoffs begin this weekend with the wild-card round, which pits four division winners against the four non-division-winning "wild cards." The teams with the four best records draw byes this round, giving them an extra week of rest.

## Analysis

Only twice in the last six years has a team that has played on the opening weekend of the postseason advanced to the Super Bowl — Tennessee in 1999 and Baltimore in 2000. Both were wild cards, and the Ravens went on to win the championship.

Here are the why's and why not's of the four teams playing Saturday on wild-card weekend:

### St. Louis Rams (8-8) at Seattle Seahawks (9-7)

**RAMS: WHY THEY CAN WIN** — Officiating emphasis. NFL supervisor of officials Mike Pereira says the crackdown on illegal contact will continue in January and games will be called in the postseason the same way they were called in the regular season.

That's great news for the passing teams. Few teams are as heavily reliant on the pass to win games as the Rams, who finished fifth in the NFL in passing. Quarterback Marc Bulger had more than 4,000 yards and passed for 3,964 yards despite missing two games with injuries. Any time the ball is in the air the Rams have a chance.

**RAMS: WHY THEY WON'T** — Road woes. Wild-card teams must play on the road. The Rams are a wild-card team that can't win on the road. The Rams went 6-2 at the Edward Jones Dome this season and 2-6 away from it. The Dolphins beat the Rams in Miami to snap an 0-6 start. The Rams were paddled in December by the 6-10 Cardinals in Arizona, 31-7. They also were spanked by good teams, losing 40-22 in Foxboro to the Patriots and 45-17 in Green Bay to the Packers. Make



New York Jets defensive end Shaun Ellis (92), celebrates Jonathan Vilma's 38-yard interception return for a touchdown against the St. Louis Rams in St. Louis on Sunday. Ellis, who had 11 sacks this season, will be leading the Jets' defensive charge against the San Diego Chargers on Saturday.

the Rams wear their white road jerseys and they become football pacifists.

**SEAHAWKS: WHY THEY CAN WIN** — Opportunism. The Seahawks are soft on defense. They were the only division champion that allowed more points (373) than it scored (371), and only six NFL defenses allowed more yards than the Seahawks. But this defense has survived by forcing turnovers. The Seahawks finished third in the NFL in interceptions (23) and sixth in takeaways (35).

Turnovers created good field position for your offense. Thirteen Seattle defenders came up with takeaways on interceptions or

fumbles.

Cornerback Ken Lucas intercepted six passes and recovered two fumbles.

**SEAHAWKS: WHY THEY WON'T** — No momentum. The Seahawks looked like a Super Bowl contender in September when they rolled to 3-0. But Seattle blew a 17-point fourth quarter lead at home against St. Louis in Week 4, losing 33-27 in overtime, and hasn't been the same team since. The Seahawks staggered down the stretch with a 6-6 record, including a blowout home loss to Buffalo and an embarrassing road loss at Arizona. Seattle no longer looks like a Super Bowl contender. You want to be play-

ing your best football of the season in December, not September.

### New York Jets (10-6) at San Diego Chargers (12-4)

**JETS: WHY THEY CAN WIN** — Defensive bookends. Ends Jon Abraham and Shaun Ellis anchor a stout run defense and frantic pass rush. Ellis was a Pro Bowler in 2003 and Abraham in 2004.

Ellis had 11 sacks this season and Abraham 9½. They also combined for 105 tackles to muscle the Jets into the top five in the NFL in run defense. They are the type of size/speed ends Bill Parcells would love as bookends in his defense. In fact, Parcells se-

lected both in the first round of his final draft with the Jets in 2000. They control the edges of the defense.

Abraham, who has missed the last month with a sprained lateral collateral ligament in his right knee, is listed as probable on the injury report.

**JETS: WHY THEY WON'T** — Offensive imbalance. The Jets rank third in the NFL in rushing but 22nd in passing.

They generated fewer than 200 yards passing in 10 games and failed to throw a touchdown pass in five of them. Curtis Martin had a terrific season, contending for a rushing title despite running smack into eight-man fronts. He'll probably see nine-man fronts in the postseason as defenses dare soft-armed Chad Pennington to throw. The Jets managed two individual 100-yard receiving games.

The Colts had an NFL-high 14.

**CHARGERS: WHY THEY CAN WIN** — Coaching. That's right, coaching. Marty Schottenheimer has been much-maligned because he has never taken a team to the Super Bowl in his 19 seasons as an NFL head coach. What can't be disregarded is the fact he ranks eighth in career victories (177) and has suffered only two losing seasons. He engineered a 10-city improvement in San Diego from 2003 to 2004. He's reached three conference title games. If he reaches a fourth, don't bet against him. LaDanian Tomlinson provides the best version yet of Martell.

**CHARGERS: WHY THEY WON'T** — Travel. If the Chargers win their first round game in sunny Southern California, they probably will have to travel to the Eastern time zone on three consecutive weekends. That would be a boon for the frequent flyer account — 2,106 miles to Pittsburgh (AFC semifinals), 2,585 miles to Boston (AFC finals) and then 2,088 miles to Jacksonville (Super Bowl). But three cross-country flights in a span of three weeks takes a toll on the body. San Diego played its only Super Bowl in Miami, which was smoked by the 49ers, 49-26.

## Odds makers, matchups favor Seahawks, Chargers, Colts, Pack

BY DAVE GOLDBERG

The Associated Press

## NFL picks

The NFL playoffs are usually easier to handicap than the regular season for a simple reason: The better teams are at home.

So the odds makers automatically give the three points for home-field advantage, plus a few more for being better. That's the case as the playoffs start this weekend.

The closest line is in Seattle, where the Seahawks are favored by four over the Rams, even though St. Louis won both meetings between them in the NFC West, easily the league's worst division.

That's one of two division matchups this weekend. The other is in Green Bay, where the

Packers and Vikings play for the third time this season. In fact, all four games are rematches, although Broncos-Colts is barely that. Indianapolis played scrubs in Denver last week.

The picks:

**St. Louis (plus 4) at Seattle:** The Seahawks' problems this year started in their fourth game, when they were unbeaten and led the Rams by 17 points at home with just more than 6 minutes to go. They lost 33-27 in overtime and later fell 23-12 in St. Louis.

It shouldn't happen again, although Seattle is in psychological disarray.

Shaun Alexander "apologized"

for complaining about not getting the ball for the Seahawks' final touchdown against Atlanta last week and losing the rushing title by 1 yard to the Jets' Curtis Martin. But there was an edge to the apology.

Nonetheless, St. Louis was 2-6 on the road this season, Seattle is more talented anyway and ... **SEAHAWKS, 35-26.**

**New York Jets (plus 6) at San Diego:** Another rematch: New York won 34-28 in Week 2, when the Chargers didn't know they were good.

Since then, the Jets have gotten better, and San Diego has gotten worse, in part because Chad Pennington is playing with a sore rotator cuff, something his many critics in New York don't seem to have considered in taking shots at him.

Pennington doesn't have the strongest arm when healthy. Now he can hardly throw deep at all, allowing defenses to stack for Curtis Martin. San Diego will do that and ... **CHARGERS, 24-16.**

**Denver (plus 10) at Indianapolis:** The Broncos made the playoffs by beating the visiting Colts, who used Jim Sorgi at quarterback.

These are the Colts with Peyton Manning, who beat Denver 41-10 in last season's first round at the RCA Dome.

That caused Mike Shanahan to revamp his defense, bringing in Champ Bailey and John Lynch to help the secondary. They have, but they're not going to shut down Manning, Edgerwin James and the Marvin Harrison-Reggie Wayne-Brandon Stokley trioka. ... **COLTS, 31-17.**

**Minnesota (plus 6) at Green Bay:** The Packers won both meetings this season 34-31, the latest in Minneapolis on Dec. 24. And their secondary is certainly vulnerable to Dante Culpepper, Randy Moss and the Packers, although Moss produced some discord by walking off the field with 2 seconds left in the Vikings' loss in Washington last week.

Nonetheless, the betting numbers are these: The Packers won nine of their final 11 games; the Vikings lost seven of their last 10, the second straight season they've done that.

The Lambeau magic isn't what it used to be, but ... **PACKERS, 34-31.**

**Final week: 7-8-1 (spread), 9-7 (straight up).**

**Regular season:** 111-123-6 (spread), 156-84 (straight up).

# Nearly 50 Rockets' winning streak

BY JOEL ANDERSON  
The Associated Press

HOUSTON — A year removed from one of the worst seasons in franchise history, the Phoenix Suns are now winning even when they're road-weary and their best player has an off-night.

Shawn Marion scored 22 points, Quentin Richardson added 18 points and 14 rebounds and the Suns effortlessly bounced back from a draining victory in Minnesota the night before with a 108-98 win over the Houston Rockets on Wednesday night.

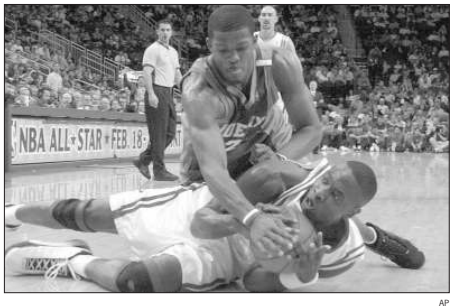
"We weren't sharp. Maybe it was fatigue," said point guard Steve Nash, an off-season acquisition from Dallas who is perhaps the biggest reason the Suns are 16 games ahead of last year's pace.

"But we were good enough. That's what we've done a lot this year. We make enough shots and do just enough to give ourselves a chance."

Amare Stoudemire finally cooled off after a torrid two-game stretch in which he scored a total of 84 points, finishing with 19 points on 5-for-15 shooting and nine rebounds.

But his Suns teammates picked up the slack and rolled to a relatively easy victory despite coming off an emotional 122-115 win at Minnesota the night before. Houston, meanwhile, had been off for two days since a 99-80 win over Utah and hasn't played a road game since Dec. 29.

"We were coming off back-to-backs and they've been here waiting for us for a couple of days," Marion said. "But we came out and put them back on their heels."



Phoenix Suns guard Joe Johnson (2) and Houston Rockets center Dikembe Mutombo wrestle for the ball in the second quarter on Wednesday in Houston.

Nash had 12 points and 13 assists. Joe Johnson had 17 points and 12 rebounds and Casey Jacobsen tied a season high with 14 points for the Suns, who won their fourth straight to improve their NBA-best record to 28-4.

Tracy McGrady led Houston with 24 points, David Wesley added 15 and Yao Ming finished with 14 points and 10 re-

bounds. The loss snapped Houston's season-high three-game winning streak.

In a matchup between the NBA's youngest team (Phoenix) and its oldest (Houston), the Suns jumped out to a big early lead. Houston gamely fought back and the Suns were ultimately able to pull away.

Phoenix showed few signs of fatigue from their grueling victory over the Tim-

berwolves on Tuesday night and a plane ride that didn't get them into Houston until the wee hours of the morning.

Regardless, the Suns ran Houston ragged from the tipoff.

"It's tough to come back up emotionally like we did," Suns coach Mike D'Antoni said. "We expended a lot of energy (in Minnesota), but somehow, they found some more tonight."

Johnson scored 11 points in the first four minutes, including three tees, to help the Suns race out to an early 22-8 lead. The Rockets never really recovered.

Bob Smith hit a jumper to move the Rockets within 74-71 late in the third quarter, but Jacobsen quickly responded with another three and Houston never got any closer to the rest of the way.

Phoenix put on quite a shooting display against one of the league's best defensive teams, going 15-for-34 from behind the arc. They finished one three-pointer shy of their season best of 16 against the Lakers on Dec. 8 and tied their season high of 34 at times.

There is no answer to our fast-paced world when we are making shots," Marion said.

At one point in the second half, McGrady missed 11 straight shots. He went only 8-for-25 from the field, but had nine rebounds and five assists.

"I've never seen a team that keeps you back on your heels when you make a shot," McGrady said. "Where not used to it. Those guys get the ball out and they're gone. It was crazy tonight. You're just glad that every NBA team isn't like that."

## NBA scoreboard

### Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division			
New York	16	50	—
Philadelphia	15	49	½
Boston	15	47	—
Brooklyn	12	36	—
New Jersey	11	35	4½

Southeast Division			
Miami	18	76	—
Orlando	16	53	—
Atlanta	15	49	—
Charlotte	15	47	—
Washington	12	36	—

Central Division			
Cleveland	19	61	—
Detroit	15	47	—
Indiana	13	52	2½
Chicago	10	34	—
Milwaukee	10	34	8

### Western Conference

Southwest Division			
San Antonio	20	78	—
Los Angeles	19	67	—
Houston	16	50	9½
San Diego	15	47	—
New Orleans	2	28	22½

Northwest Division			
Seattle	12	46	—
Portland	12	46	—
Denver	14	42	9½
Utah	13	37	13½

Pacific Division			
Phoenix	4	27	—
Sacramento	20	67	—
Los Angeles	19	67	—
LA Clippers	15	51	1½
Golden State	12	36	17½

Westwood's games			
Cleveland 101, Atlanta 95			
Boston 84, Sacramento 83			
Toronto 96, Sacramento 99			
Orlando 105, Seattle 87			
Charlotte 87, New Jersey 74			
Miami 102, New York 94			
Salt Lake 108, New Orleans 99			
LA Lakers 108, Phoenix 108			
LA Lakers 106, Utah 99			
LA Clippers 102, Portland 98			

Thursday's games			
Seattle at Washington			
Phoenix at Detroit			
Indiana at San Antonio			
Milwaukee at Toronto			
Charlotte at Atlanta			
Golden State at New Jersey			
Salt Lake at Memphis			
Philadelphia at Minnesota			
LA Lakers at Phoenix			
Miami at Portland			

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# Mavericks continue improving with near-perfect Terry starting

The Associated Press

DALLAS — The Dallas Mavericks are finding out that maybe Jason Terry was the right point guard to replace Steve Nash after all.

Terry continued his roll since finally making into the starting lineup, scoring a season-high 28 points and doing a great job running the offense in a 118-104 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers on Wednesday night.

"I started getting in the lane and hitting guys, then they started to find me and I started attacking," Terry said. "That's the kind of rhythm we're looking for."

Terry's numbers were gaudy: 9-for-11 on field goals, perfect on free throws. He also had six rebounds, five assists and just one turnover. The stunning part was a 12-minute stretch when he either scored or assisted on 27 of 29 points, taking Dallas from five down to up by 14.

But perhaps the most important stat is the Mavericks improving to 6-1 since he's become the starter, with their scoring up to 110 points per game. They were 15-9 and averaging 99 points when Terry was backing up rookie Devin Harris.

The Lakers gave up their second-most points in regulation this season, but coach Rudy Tomjanovich called it "the worst defense we've played." It also came the night after a 100-83 loss to Los Angeles that wasn't even that close.

"We've got to put a tourniquet on it and win some games," Tomjanovich said, adding that missed shots on offense tend to leave players sagging on defense.

Kobe Bryant scored 32 points, but was shut out until early in the second quarter, when Los Angeles already trailed by 15. He also was angry about the defense.

"We're not getting it done," he said. "Tonight, they got whatever they wanted. Teams have been getting in the paint and getting easy shots on us. Sometimes it takes a couple of kids in the butt to get you going."

Dallas led by as much as 17 and by at least 10 throughout the second half. The rout was a nice way for the Mavericks to cap their first three-game winning streak over the Lakers since 1986-87.

**Heat 102, Knicks 94:** At Miami, Shaquille O'Neal had 33 points and 18 rebounds, Dwyane Wade scored 21 and the Heat limited the Knicks to two field goals in a seven-minute stretch of the first half.

O'Neal made 14 of 21 shots, finishing the 30-point and 18-rebound marks for the third time this season. Wade added a game-high nine assists.

Miami beat most of the way, held a 12-32 rebound margin and showed no ill effects from Monday's home loss to Seattle which snapped a fran-



Dallas Mavericks' Jason Terry, center, flies to the hoop around Los Angeles Lakers' Tierra Brown (5), Slava Medvedenko (14) and Brian Cook, background right.

chise-record 14-game winning streak.

**Magic 105, SuperSonics 87:** Steve Francis scored 27 of his 35 points after halftime, and host Orlando snapped a four-game losing streak.

Grant Hill scored 21 points, shooting 9-for-11, with seven rebounds and six assists. Curtis Mobley added 13 points while Hedo Turkoglu scored 12 off the bench.

**Cavaliers 101, Hawks 85:** At Cleveland, Zydrunas Ilgauskas scored 20 of his 28 points after halftime and Cleveland shut down Atlanta early in the fourth quarter.

LeBron James added 20 points, nine assists and six rebounds in his second game wearing a protective mask over a broken left cheek for the Cavs, who clamped down on the Hawks, blanketing them 12-0 in the first 8:16 of the final quarter.

Atlanta missed its first 12 shots — and both free-throw attempts in the fourth before Tyrone Lee dropped a 15-foot jumper to bring the Hawks to 90-79.

**Celtics 84, Warriors 83:** Paul Pierce had 19 points, eight rebounds and eight assists to make up for a poor outlet shooting night and Al Jefferson had his first career double-double with 10 points and 11 rebounds.

Gary Payton added 13 points for the Celtics, who won their fifth straight home game.

**Bobcats 102, Timberwolves 84:** Gerald Wallace had 20 points and 12 rebounds, and an in-your-face block by Wally Szczerbiak that he converted into a fast-break layup.

Wallace had one of his best games as a Bobcat, turning it up during a 16-1 run that helped Charlotte break its six-game losing streak at home. He started the run with a free throw, and he hustled upcourt after blocking Szczer-

biak's shot for a layup that drew a foul. His free throw made it 87-81 with 2:26 to play.

Wallace then stole the ball from Eddie Griffin, and Brevin Knight fired it back to him for a rim-rattling dunk. Melvin Ely added consecutive baskets for the Bobcats, who spread their lead to 93-81 as the Timberwolves went over five minutes without a field goal.

**Raptors 96, Kings 93:** Chris Bosh had 23 points and 13 rebounds for the first back-to-back 20-point games of his career, and Jalen Rose had 20 points off the bench for the Raptors, who have won five straight at home.

Mike Bibby had a season-high 32 points for the Kings, who had won of eight of their previous nine road games. Sacramento played in New York the night before.

**Bucks 97, Nets 74:** At Milwaukee, Joe Smith and Mike James each scored 17 points and Desmond Mason added 16 for the Bucks, who had lost three straight and eight of 11.

Jabari Smith had career highs with 19 points and six assists in a season-high 36 minutes off the bench for the Nets, who came in scoring 86.5 points a game — 29th in the NBA.

**Bulls 95, Hornets 89:** Kirk Hinrich scored 19 points and Eddy Curry added 17, helping resurgent Chicago hand the New Orleans its ninth straight loss.

The Hornets, led by Baron Davis' 21 points, erased a 14-point deficit in the second half, but the Bulls clamped down defensively, forcing New Orleans to attempt a barrage of three-pointers, most of which missed.

**76ers 106, Jazz 99:** Allen Iverson scored 10 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter, and Philadelphia won in Utah for the first time in four years.

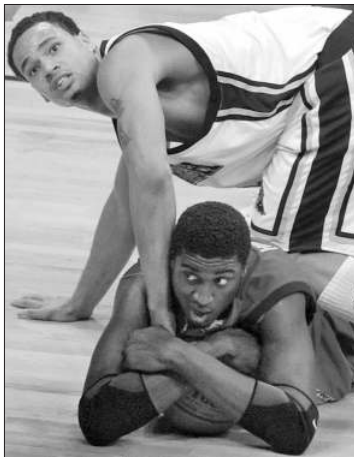
Kenny Thomas added 30 points, scoring 18 during the Sixers' 39-point opening quarter, and Marc Jackson added 14 points, making all 10 of his free throws.

Philadelphia improved to 5-2 on an eight-game road trip, which ended Friday at Minnesota. The Sixers hadn't won at Utah since Dec. 26, 2000 and had dropped 15 of 15 on the road against the Jazz.

**Clippers 102, Trail Blazers 98:** At Los Angeles, Corey Maggette scored 15 of his 31 points in the final quarter and hit a key jumper with 20 seconds remaining.

Maggette's 18-footer from the left side off a pass from Rick Brunson gave the Clippers a four-point lead. Portland's Damon Stoudamire then missed a jump shot. Zach Randolph missed on a putback attempt.

The Clippers' Chris Kaman rebounded and passed to Brunson, who was intentionally fouled and made both free throws. Los Angeles allowed Joel Przybilla an unchallenged dunk as time expired — one of only three baskets by the Trail Blazers in the final 7:43.



Pittsburgh's Chevon Troutman reaches in to force a jump ball against Georgetown center Roy Hibbert in the second half on Wednesday.

## Georgetown hands Pitt another upset

By ALAN ROBINSON

The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Jamie Dixon learned what longtime Pitt coach Paul Evans often discovered during the 1980s and 1990s: Sometimes having better talent isn't enough against a John Thompson-coached Georgetown team.

Brandon Bowman drove the lane for the go-ahead basket with 8.4 seconds remaining and No. 16 Pittsburgh then failed twice to get off a shot, falling 67-64 to the Hoyas on Wednesday night in the Panthers' second upset loss in as many games.

Pitt followed up a stunning 69-66 loss Sunday to Bucknell with one nearly as surprising — only its third in 46 home games since the Petersen Events Center opened for the 2002-03 season.

Georgetown (9-3) had lost eight consecutive Big East games dating to last season, only to win its conference debut under new coach John Thompson III — the son of the Hoyas coach who was 24-10 against Pitt from 1982-99.

The Hoyas hit nine of 12 three-point attempts during the first half, when they once led 28-9, then ran their Princeton-style offense featuring numerous back-door cuts and quick passes to perfection in the second half.

"Obviously, I'm happy," Thompson said. "The ball bounced our way the last two minutes. It was a big win against a terrific team."

And a struggling Pitt team, too. The Panthers (10-2), who have

shared or won the last three Big East regular-season titles, lost two in a row for the first time since Notre Dame and Miami beat them during a four-day span in January 2002. They hadn't lost consecutive home games since Feb. 2001 losses to Notre Dame and Georgetown.

"This really hurts, to lose two straight games at home," said Chris Traft, who led Pitt with 20 points. "We've got to find a way to get through."

Ashtanti Cook hit four of Georgetown's 11 three-pointers and scored 23 points, including a free throw with 5.2 seconds left after Pitt's Chevon Troutman threw the ball away on a long pass.

"He kept us in it on some possessions where we could have crumbled," Thompson said. "He hit some shots to stop runs and keep us in the game."

Pitt got the ball back with a chance to tie at Georgetown missed its second free throw, but Antonio Graves was tied up near mid-court and the Panthers never got a shot off.

Bowman scored 18 and reserve Darrell Owens had 11 for the Hoyas, who were 16-point underdogs despite winning their previous four.

Pitt's Karl Krauser had 12 of his 15 points during a furious first-half flurry, but the Panthers couldn't hold on after turning the 19-point deficit into a 59-53 lead with five minutes remaining.

Pitt's last three opponents have shot 50 percent or better, something only one of Pitt's 36 opponents did last season.



# BC stuns UConn, off to best start in history

BY DONNA TOMMELLE

The Associated Press

HARTFORD, Conn. — Connecticut's latest loss befuddled coach Jim Calhoun.

No. 25 Boston College (12-0, 1-0 Big East) outmuscled and outthrust the defending NCAA champs in a 75-70 win Wednesday night to jump out to their best start in school history.

"We're missing something," Calhoun said. "Leadership? Ability to listen? Sometimes kids come off championship seasons and a couple guys have a confidence. Unfortunately they should have more questions."

Craig Smith scored 16 points including the game-winning free throw with 35 seconds left to lift the Eagles to their third win in 12 meetings at the Hartford Civic Center and first since 1987.

"We did not look like a Connecticut team," Calhoun said. "We gave away that opportunity of having the crowd and allowed BC to take the game away from us."

In foul trouble for most of the game, Smith made the most of his 16 minutes. The 250-pound forward scored 16 points for Boston College, which joins the Atlantic Coast Conference next year.

"We're not going to let people come and beat on us. We're going to put the beating on them," Smith said.

Jared Dudley led the Eagles with 17 points and was able to penetrate the lane time and again against the much bigger frontcourt of 10th-ranked UConn (8-2, 0-1).

Jo Boone dominated inside for UConn with 18 points and 15 boards, but it was the Eagles' frontcourt that prevailed.

Although the Huskies outrebounded BC 44-40, the Eagles scored 23 second-chance points on just 14 offensive rebounds.

"They're bigger, they're longer, they're athletic, but when it comes to banging I don't think they want any part of that," Smith said.

Neutralized in the first half by foul trouble, Smith played just six minutes and had two points. He made up for it in a hurry in the second. He scored 10 points in the first 5½ minutes to help the Eagles rally from a seven-point halftime deficit.

"We are a great team with [Smith], but we've played enough games without him to know how to play," BC coach Al Skinner said. "It was really a team effort."

The Eagles went up for good at 47-46 on a breakaway layup by Louis Hinnant and extended the lead to 10 over the next six minutes.

Boone brought the Huskies back, scoring seven points in a 13-6 run. UConn final-

ly caught up with 56 seconds left when Rashad Anderson hit two of three free throws to pull even at 70. Smith was fouled on the next possession, sinking both shots to ice the game.

Anderson, UConn's three-point specialist, finished with 15 points.

"This was the start of league play, neighborhood brawls," Calhoun said. "I was excited about the game and I thought we were ready. We may have been ready physically, but we certainly weren't ready mentally."

UConn has dominated the series the last 17 years, winning 28 of 31 meetings, but because bad feelings exist over the Eagles' dealings with the ACC.

The fans clearly made their opinions known, holding up farewell signs such as "Betrayal College." Some in the sellout crowd of 16,294 sarcastically waved good riddance when the final buzzer sounded.

The Eagles didn't notice — they were too busy celebrating.

"One league game is just as important as another whether it's UConn, Syracuse or Rutgers," Skinner said. "Maybe in March it will have some significance, but right now you've got to win as many games as you possibly can."



Boston College's Jared Dudley takes the ball away from Connecticut's Charley Villanova in the second half Wednesday. Dudley paced the Eagles with 17 points.

# Healed Horton sparks Michigan in Big Ten opener

The Associated Press

IOWA CITY, Iowa — Daniel Horton returned from a six-game absence and made an immediate impact for Michigan.

Returning to the court after missing six games with a knee injury, Horton scored 13 points, handed out two assists and provided key leadership down the stretch to help Michigan beat

No. 14 Iowa 65-63 Wednesday night.

Horton didn't start, but entered the game midway through the first half and promptly hit his first shot, a nifty turnaround jumper from the top of the key.

"I just wanted to come in and contribute, and I guess I came in and ... gave the team a shot in the arm, but that wasn't my goal," said Horton, who strained a knee in practice Dec. 5.

"It felt good to get a big win on the road and to get back out there and play. It's a good feeling right now for everybody."

The victory is the third straight for the Wolverines (9-5, 1-0 Big Ten) and snapped the Hawkeyes' nine-game winning streak.

The Wolverines led most of the way but had to fight off a second-half rally to beat Iowa for the third time in the last four games.

The Hawkeyes (12-2, 0-1) squandered several chances to tie or take the lead in the final minutes.

Pierre Pierce, who led Iowa with 15 points, was fouled by Dion Harris on a three-point attempt with 1.6 seconds to go, but missed the first of three free throws.

Greg Brunner, Adam Haluska and Jeff Horner each finished with 14, but the Hawkeyes struggled all night with shooting, rebounding and capitalizing on

Michigan's 25 turnovers.

"Obviously a frustrating way to start our Big Ten season," said Iowa coach Steve Alford. "It's my responsibility to make sure the team was ready, and they obviously weren't ready. I take full responsibility for that."

**No. 1 Illinois 84, Ohio State 65:** James Augustine tied his career high with 21 points as No. 1 Illinois all but abandoned its outside game for inside jumpers and layups in its Big Ten opener.

The Illini (15-0) led by only six at halftime, but used an 13-7 run at the start of the second half to build their lead to 12 with 14:14 to go. Ohio State (11-3) never got closer than seven after that and Illinois outscored the Buckeyes 19-8 in the final 10:20.

**No. 2 Kansas 65, Texas A&M 60:** Alex Galindo hit a tiebreaking three-pointer, and Christian Moody and Aaron Miles each made two free throws in the final seconds to host Kansas.

The Aggies (11-1) came in as 17-point underdogs despite being one of the country's last unbeaten teams. But Kansas (10-0), without injured star Wayne Simien, struggled all night against the Aggies' aggressive, pressing defense. Texas A&M, which has lost 18 straight regular-season conference games, held the Jayhawks to 41 percent shooting.

**No. 5 Duke 59, Princeton 46:** At Durham, N.C., J.J. Redick made all 14 of his free throws and scored 21 points, helping the Duke Devils celebrate the 65th anniversary of Cameron Indoor Stadium in style.

Shelden Williams had 14 rebounds for the Duke Devils, who improved to 10-0 for the fourth time in five seasons.

**No. 6 Syracuse 79, St. John's 65:** At New York, Hakim Warrick scored 22 points and Gerry McNamara added 19 for Syra-

cuse, which had one of its best shooting games of the season.

The Orange (14-1) opened Big East play with their 36th consecutive win over an intrastate opponent.

**No. 8 Kentucky 79, South Carolina 75:** Kelenna Azubuike made four three-pointers and finished with 21 points as Kentucky held on against visiting South Carolina.

Chuck Hayes added 15 points and 10 rebounds for Kentucky (10-1), which won its league opener for the 17th time in 18 years.

South Carolina (8-4, 0-1) has lost three games to ranked teams this season, having also dropped four-point road decisions at Kansas and No. 16 Pittsburgh.

**Houston 70, No. 17 Louisville 67:** At Houston, Andre Owens scored 27 points, including a three-pointer for the go-ahead basket with 21 seconds left.

It was Houston's first win over a Top 25 team since beating then-No. 25 Tulsa on Dec. 4, 1996.

Freshman Juan Palacios had 20 points for Louisville, which lost to Houston for the first time in nine meetings.

**No. 18 Mississippi State 90, Auburn 53:** At Starkville, Miss., Lawrence Roberts had 19 points and 15 rebounds, and Mississippi State won the teams' Southeastern Conference opener.

Winsome Frazier and Jamall Edmonson each had 12 points for the Bulldogs (13-2), the defending regular-season champions who shot 50 percent from the field to win their eighth straight over Auburn.

**Vanderbilt 70, No. 19 Alabama 56:** At Nashville, Tenn., Mario Moore shot 4-for-5 from three-point range and finished with 16 points.

Jason McVay also scored 16 points for the Commodores (10-4, 1-0 SEC), who won their sixth



Kansas forward Christian Moody, left, and Texas A&M's Chris Walker battle for a rebound during the first half Wednesday in Lawrence, Kan.

straight overall and beat the Crimson Tide (11-3, 0-1) for the fourth time in a row.

**No. 20 Michigan St 84, Penn St 58:** Alan Anderson scored 17 points and Shannon Brown added 16 to lead the visiting Spartans in the Big Ten opener for both teams.

Michigan State (9-2) shot 30-for-59 for the game and 66-for-117 from the free-throw line in the Spartans' sixth straight win.

**Villanova 84, No. 21 West Virginia 64:** At Villanova, Pa., Allan Ray scored 26 points and Mike Nardi added 18 to lead Villanova, snapping the Mountaineers' season-opening 10-game winning

streak.

Curtis Sumpter added 13 points and Randy Foye had 11 for the Wildcats (8-1), who won their seventh straight.

D'or Fisher scored 14 points and Tyrone Sully added 10 for the Mountaineers (10-1).

**No. 24 George Washington 71, La Salle 42:** At Washington, T.J. Thompson had 16 points, Pops Mensah-Bonsu had 12 points, 14 rebounds and four blocks, and Mike Hall had nine points and a career-high 17 rebounds for George Washington (9-2, 1-0 Atlantic 10), who took a double-digit lead 12 minutes in and was never threatened.

# USC is not ready to slow down

## Trojans are loaded for run at unprecedented three-peat

BY RALPH D. RUSSO  
The Associated Press

MIAMI — Southern California has a chance to make history next season with a third straight AP national title.

Nine other teams have flirted with a three-peat, none was better equipped to do it than USC.

The Trojans head into the 2005 season with a 22-game winning streak, the longest in the country. If they are No. 1 in The Associated Press preseason poll, they will match Miami's record streak of 19 straight polls as the top-ranked team.

USC locked up its second consecutive title and fifth overall with a stunningly easy 55-19 victory over Oklahoma on Tuesday night in the Orange Bowl.

Turning USC into the nation's pre-eminent college football program has been just about the coldest thing going for Trojans coach Pete Carroll.

"I have people tell me, 'just relax.' Don't tell me relax. I'm having a... ball," he said Wednesday morning, still a little groggy after celebrating till dawn with his team.

But get a hyped-up 53-year-old coach talking USC football, and even a sleepless night can't curb his enthusiasm.

"We get to do this for six months, be on top of the college football world. We'll likely get a chance at being the No. 1 team coming into next year," Carroll said, picking up steam with every word.

"That's awesome stuff. I don't want to do anything different than that. That's fine. I'll play some hoops and do a little boogie boarding and all that kind of stuff, but I don't want to get very far away from it. It's fun."

The last school to win back-to-back AP titles was Nebraska in 1994-95.

A year earlier, the Cornhuskers came within a long missed field goal on the final play of the Orange Bowl from beating Florida State for the national title. They finished third in the final rankings that season then were sixth in 1996.

Alabama was No. 2 the season before it won consecutive titles in 1978-79.

Army went back-to-back in 1944-45 and finished No. 2 to Notre Dame in 1946. The Irish went on to win two straight, finished second to Michigan in 1948, then won it again in '49.

But that was a very different era. Parity has made it tough for even the most prestigious programs — Notre Dame, Nebraska, Penn State — to stay on top.

USC went through it, too. The Trojans spent much of the 1990s trying to recapture lost glory.

When Carroll arrived in 2001 as an NFL castoff, nobody pegged him as the next great college football coach.

Now, he's just about the only person who has watched USC rip through the past two seasons that



Southern Cal's Steve Smith, left, celebrates one of his three touchdowns in the Orange Bowl against Oklahoma with teammates Reggie Bush, center top, and Dwayne Jarrett. All three offensive weapons will return to the Trojans next season. Smith and Bush are sophomores and Jarrett is a freshman.

isn't starting to use the 'D' word — as in dynasty.

"We're definitely on our way to qualifying as a dynasty," said All-American Reggie Bush, part of an offense that saved it's best performance for the season's biggest game and will return almost intact next season.

Whether the 2005 Trojans are breaking in a new quarterback is a question that will be answered some time in the next few weeks.

Heisman Trophy winner Matt Leinart tossed an Orange Bowl-record five touchdown passes in what could have been his final college game.

The junior has been hedging lately on his pledge to complete his college eligibility. You can't blame him. The 6-foot-5 left-hander has the look of a top NFL draft pick.

But for now, Leinart is noncommittal.

"It's going to take a lot to for me to leave," he said.

And if he does, USC has former Louisiana prep star John David Booty on deck after two years of seasoning under the masterful tutelage of offensive coordinator Norm Chow. That's if Booty can beat out Mark Sanchez, the top-rated quarterback prospect in the nation who has committed to USC out of junior college.

"I say this again, and I don't mean to make any disclaimer or any big statement, but we have structured our program to be able to carry on with losses that occur, whether it was Carson Palmer, Troy Polamalu or the five running backs we lost a couple of years ago or Mike Williams or Keary Colbert or whatever," Carroll said. "As long as I hang in there I can keep it together."



Southern Cal coach Pete Carroll leads the band after beating Oklahoma 55-19 in the Orange Bowl. Carroll has armed the Trojans with a deep and talented team that doesn't lose a beat when its star leave.

Even as the Trojans were basking in the school's fifth national title, the next line of blue-chips players heading to USC was forming.

Carroll said he had four messages on recruits on his cell phone after the Orange Bowl and USC received two verbal commitments.

"The biggest deal is to continue to bring in talent," Carroll said.

Right now USC's talent pool seems bottomless. Their coaching, flawless. As for their potential to keep piling up championships, there is no end in sight.

Ralph D. Russo covers college football for The Associated Press. Write to him at: russo@ap.org



USC junior Matt Leinart said it will take a lot for him to leave the dynasty that he helped create.

## Leinart uncertain on status

BY KEN PETERS  
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Sleepy-eyed Matt Leinart said Wednesday he remains uncertain whether he will return to USC for his senior season or go into the NFL.

The Trojans' Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback and his teammates — after celebrating into the wee hours in Miami — arrived back on campus late in the afternoon. They were greeted by a crowd of about a hundred cheering, photo-snapping fans.

"I have until Jan. 15 to decide what I'm going to do," Leinart said of the deadline for declaring for the NFL Draft.

"It's going to take a lot for me to leave, despite the game last night and the Heisman Trophy. I'm going to talk with Coach (Pete) Carroll about it, get his ideas."

Two other of the nation's top quarterbacks this season, California's Aaron Rodgers and Utah's Alex Smith, already have announced they will leave school early to enter the draft.

Asked how his teammates were advising him, Leinart smiled and said, "A lot of mixed feelings. A lot of guys say go, and a lot say stay."

He ostensibly improved his stock with the NFL considerably Tuesday night with his performance in the 55-19 BCS title game victory over Oklahoma in the Orange Bowl.

Leinart went 18-of-35 for 332 yards, with no interceptions, and threw an Orange Bowl-record five touchdowns to far outshine Oklahoma's 2003 Heisman winner, Jason White. White threw three interceptions.

"Matt had an incredible game," Carroll said.

Although Leinart seems to have nothing left to prove as a college quarterback, he apparently would like to remain at USC and help the Trojans win a third consecutive national championship.

"There's talk about building a dynasty, and I know coach Carroll doesn't like to use that term, but I really don't see us slowing down," he said.

Leinart has some other business commitments, as well.

"Next week, it's back to school," he said. "Then workouts start in about a month."

# Johnson, Yanks agree on contract extension

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Randy Johnson and the New York Yankees reached a preliminary agreement Thursday on a \$32 million, two-year contract extension, The Associated Press learned.

The Big Unit waived his no-trade clause as part of the agreement, a baseball official and a person close to Johnson said on condition of anonymity. Arizona's trade with New York, which was tentatively agreed to last week, calls for the Diamondbacks to receive pitchers Javier Vazquez and Brad Halsey, catcher Dioner Navarro and \$9 million.

Only one step remains for the five-time Cy Young Award winner to join the Yankees: All players involved in the trade must pass physicals.

The Yankees, Diamondbacks and agents for the players were working Thursday on the logistics of arranging the medical exams.

The 41-year-old left-hander's current deal calls for a \$16 million salary in 2005, of which \$6 million is deferred to 2006, according to New York and Johnson's agents, Alan Nero and Barry Meister, were completing the structure of the new contract Thursday.

Arizona also has a preliminary agreement in place to trade Navarro and pitching prospect William Juarez to Los Angeles for outfielder Shawn Green and \$8 million. That deal is contingent on the Diamondbacks and Green agreeing to an extension, but the status of those talks was unclear Thursday.

**Ponson apologizes for involvement in fight in Aruba**  
ORANJESTAD, Aruba — Baltimore Orioles pitcher Sidney Ponson apologized for his involvement in a Christmas Day fight on a beach in Aruba, though he didn't mention allegations that he punched a judge.

"I'd like to say that I'm not at

## MLB briefs

all proud of what happened and the way I behaved on the beach that particular day," Ponson told reporters Wednesday. He is the native Papiamentu language before boarding a private jet headed to Miami. "I would like to apologize to everybody, but especially to the young people of Aruba, who always considered me their role model. I'm very sorry for what took place and I would surely never let this happen again."

Ponson also apologized to the judge and three other people who were on the beach. He did not take any questions before getting on the jet with his agent.

Ponson was released from jail Tuesday after a week in detention while police investigated allegations that he punched a judge. The 28-year-old right-hander faces charges of public violence and simple aggression.

His trial was set for March 3, when he would be in spring training with the Orioles. It was not clear whether Ponson would be required to attend the trial.

## Tigers acquire catcher Wilson

DETROIT — The New York Mets traded catcher Vance Wilson to the Detroit Tigers on Thursday for minor league infielder Anderson Hernandez.

Wilson will back up Ivan Rodriguez in Detroit. In 67 games for the Mets last season, he hit .274 with four homers and 21 RBIs, and threw out 11 of 32 (34 percent) runners who tried to steal.

## Infielder Gonzalez agrees to one-year deal with Devil Rays

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — Free agent infielder Alex S. Gonzalez is changing uniforms again after agreeing Wednesday to a \$1.75 million, one-year contract with the Tampa Bay Devil Rays.

The Devil Rays plan to use the



Randy Johnson and the New York Yankees reached a preliminary agreement Thursday on a two-year, \$32 million extension.

versatile 31-year-old at third base in hopes he can add punch to one of the weakest offenses in the American League. Two years ago, Gonzalez hit a career-high 20 homers for the Chicago Cubs.

Gonzalez hit .225 with 18 doubles, seven homers and 27 RBIs in 83 games last season with the Cubs, Montreal Expos and San Diego Padres.

## Pirates offer multiyear deal only to shortstop Wilson

PITTSBURGH — The Pittsburgh Pirates offered a multiyear deal only to shortstop Jack Wilson among their six remaining arbitration-eligible players.

Wilson, the first Pirates player since Dave Parker in 1977 to get 200 hits in a season, has talked to the Pirates about a two- or three-year deal. Last year, he became the first player to win an arbitration case with the Pirates in 11 years when he was awarded a \$1.85 million salary.

Wilson's All-Star season more than justified his money: a .308 batting average, 11 homers, 59 RBIs, 201 hits and an NL Silver Slugger award. But the Pirates didn't get similar seasons from first baseman-outfielder Craig Wilson, right-handers Josh Goss, Kip Wells and Brian Meadows and utilityman Rob Mackowiak, who received only one-year offers.

# Champ Car's Jourdain switching to Busch ride

The Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Champ Car driver Michel Jourdain Jr. signed a deal Thursday with Ford Motorsports to switch to NASCAR and run the full Busch Series schedule this season.

Jourdain plans to drive a Taurus for ppc Racing and will be the first Hispanic to race a full NASCAR schedule.

"I'm very excited about this chance," Jourdain said. "I've been wanting to come to NASCAR for a couple years now, and (Ford Racing director) Dan Davis worked very hard with me to find the right opportunity where I could have a chance to work and learn with a top team like ppc."

The 28-year-old Jourdain spent nine years in top open-wheel competition and finished 12th in the Champ Car World Series last season in a Ford-powered car for RuSport.

The son of well-known Mexican racer Michel Jourdain Sr., he became the youngest Champ Car driver at age 19 in 1996 and was the former CART series' Most Improved driver in 1997. In 152 career Champ Car starts, Jourdain had two wins, 25 top-10s and nine top-three finishes. His best championship finish was third in 2003, when he raced for Team Rahal.

But Jourdain shifted to RuSport last season rather than go with Rahal to the IRL.

## Sprinter Collins appeals to CAS after eight-year ban

LAUSANNE, Switzerland — American sprinter Michelle Collins is appealing her eight-year doping ban to the highest court in sports.

Collins filed an appeal with the Court of Arbitration for Sport, seeking to overturn the ban imposed by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency as a result of evidence collected in the BALCO steroids scandal.

No hearing date has been set. The CAS said Thursday it normally issues rulings within four months of an appeal.

The American Arbitration Association sided with USADA on Dec. 10, ruling that Collins used various performance-enhancing substances allegedly provided by the Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative.

While Collins, 33, never tested positive for drugs, USADA charged her with doping based on patterns observed in her blood and urine tests as well as evidence from the BALCO investigation.

In addition to the ban, Collins was stripped of her 2003 world and U.S. indoor titles in the 200 meters.

## Federer reaches Qatar semis

DOHA, Qatar — Roger Federer breezed into the semifinals of the \$1.2 million Qatar Open with a 6-1, 6-0 win over Feliciano Lopez on Thursday.

The world's No. 1 player, preparing to defend his Australian Open title, was flawless in extending his winning streak to 19 matches since his loss at the

## Sports briefs

Olympics in August. Federer won in 53 minutes.

In the semis, Federer will play Nikolay Pietrangeli, who rallied from a set down to beat Sebastian Grosjean 2-6, 6-3, 6-2.

## Defending champ V. Williams wins opening match

HONG KONG — Venus Williams struggled to beat Russia's Vera Zvonareva 6-2, 4-6, 7-5 Thursday in the Champions Challenge exhibition tournament.

Williams led 3-0 in the third set before suffering a lapse of concentration against Zvonareva, who reeled off five straight games to lead 5-3. Zvonareva only needed to hold serve to win the match, but Williams regained control and won the match after the Russian made a double fault.

Williams, whose season last year was cut short by injuries, played with a wrap around her left thigh but said it was just a protective measure.

Williams plays U.S. Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova in Friday's match that will determine who advances to Saturday's final. Elena Dementieva reached the final when Czech star Nicole Pietrangeli withdrew Thursday due to illness.

## Slovakia upsets U.S. squad in Hopman Cup

PERTH, Australia — Meghan Shalhough and James Blake lost singles matches in the United States' first round of the Hopman Cup match Thursday at the Hopman Cup, but the American team remains in contention for a spot in the final against Argentina.

Daniela Hantuchova defeated Shalhough 6-4, 6-2 and Dominik Hrbaty beat Blake 7-6 (2), 6-4 to give Slovakia the victory. Blake and Shalhough won the mixed doubles, losing the first set in 17 minutes but then rallying to win two tiebreakers.

That win in mixed doubles could turn out to be crucial if the U.S. team ends up tied for first place in its group. The Americans' next round-robin match is set for Friday against injury-weakened Argentina.

Argentina advanced to the final when Germany's Tommy Haas withdrew from his singles match against Guillermo Coria on Thursday because of a strained groin. Germany also defaulted in mixed doubles. Argentina reached the Hopman Cup final for the first time.

## Kildow regains downhill lead with second-place finish

SANTA CATERINA, ITALY — American Lindsey Kildow reclaimed the points lead in the World Cup downhill standings by finishing second Thursday to Austrian Michaela Dorfmeister.

It was the fourth top-three finish of the season for Kildow, who won the opening downhill on Dec. 3 in Lake Louise, Alberta. Filipe Gerg, of Germany finished third Thursday, losing the leader's job to Kildow.



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## SPORTS



Yankees, Randy Johnson reach preliminary agreement on two-year, \$32 million contract extension, Page 31

## Schottenheimer's nemesis

Playoffs have been unkind to Chargers' veteran coach

By BERNIE WILSON

The associated Press

SAN DIEGO — Marty Schottenheimer has never had a big problem getting his teams to the playoffs.

When they get there, bad things happen.

Yes, Schottenheimer is the winningest active coach with 177 regular-season wins in 18½ seasons with four franchises, including 12 with his surprising San Diego Chargers this season.

When the calendar changes to January, though, it isn't as pretty.

Schottenheimer is just 5-11 in the playoffs. He's been one-and-done seven times, including his past three trips. None of his 11 playoff teams have reached the Super Bowl.

His defeats have ranged from epic to mystifying.

Who could forget "The Drive" and "The Fumble," consecutive AFC championship games in which his Cleveland Browns came so close to a Super Bowl, only to be denied by John Elway and the Denver Broncos?

When Schottenheimer moved to Kansas City, he made it back to the AFC title game once — and lost. He also had two teams go 13-3 and lock up home-field advantage throughout the playoffs, only to be stunned by wild-card teams in the divisional round.

Now the AFC West champion Chargers get to leave their imprint on Schottenheimer's post-season record, for good or bad. They're favored over the visiting wild-card New York Jets on Saturday night.

"My approach is, you can't hide from it," Schottenheimer said. "It is what it is. We have not been nearly as effective in the playoffs as I would like to have been, but there again, there's no re-do's. And we lost some tough ones, some close ones."

His most momentous loss came on Jan. 11, 1987, in Cleveland.

With the Browns leading 20-13 and 5:32 left in regulation, Elway drove the Broncos 98 yards on 15 plays in 4:55 for the tying touch-down, then led them to the winning field goal on overtime.

"It was a terrific football game," Schottenheimer said.



Marty Schottenheimer, above, has the most regular-season victories among active NFL coaches with 177, but the San Diego Chargers' coach is just 5-11 in the postseason. His teams have been beaten in their first playoff game seven times, including the past three, and have never played in a Super Bowl.



Under Schottenheimer, the Kansas City Chiefs twice were the top seed in the AFC but lost both times in their first playoff games.



Game time is Central European.

The play he remembers most is a third-and-18 just after Elway was sacked.

"He put Steve Watson in motion," Schottenheimer said. "He was in the shotgun. When the ball was snapped it was snapped early and it hit Steve Watson in the hip,

but it was a glancing blow and John had to turn and go field the snap.

"I thought shortly afterward that if Watson had been two inches closer to where he started rather than where he was going, the ball would have hit him dead in the hip and would have been rolling around on the ground on third down, and even if they got it, it would have been fourth down."

Instead, Elway completed a 20-yard pass to Mark Jackson to keep "The Drive" alive.

A year later, in Denver, 175-pound Broncos cornerback Jeremiah Castille stripped the ball from running back Earnest

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Back-to-back champs primed to stay No. 1 for a while

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No. 10 UConn stopped by undefeated Boston College

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